



University of New Haven

Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee

2025-2029 Strategic Plan

Creating Opportunities for Youth Success



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Acknowledgements

The **2024-2029 Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (JJPOC) Strategic Plan** stands as a testament to the power of collaboration, and we extend our sincere appreciation to all those who contributed to its successful realization.

We first and foremost acknowledge the unwavering dedication and invaluable expertise of the **JJPOC Members**. This diverse assembly of experts, stakeholders, and residents from across the state generously shared their time and insights, actively shaping the contours of this plan. Their commitment to advancing the juvenile justice system is both commendable and inspiring.

We also extend our heartfelt gratitude to the **Tow Youth Justice Initiative (TYJI)** for their exceptional leadership and unwavering support. TYJI staff provided indispensable subject matter expertise, facilitated the strategic planning day, and furnished a critical foundation of information that guided and informed the plan's development.

Finally, we offer our sincerest thanks to **each and every individual who contributed to** the creation of this Strategic Plan. Their collective dedication to improving the juvenile justice system in our state is truly remarkable, and we are deeply grateful for their contributions.

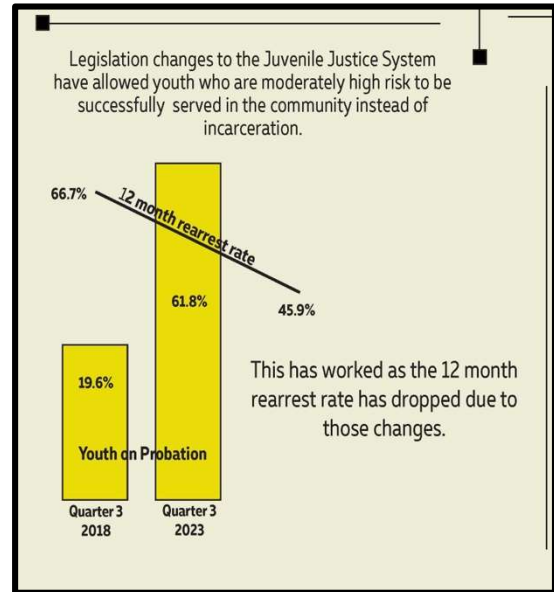
Letter From the Chairs

Dear Members, Stakeholders, and Advocates,

It is with a sense of both urgency and optimism that we present this update of the strategic plan, highlighting **the vital work of the JJPOC** and our ongoing pursuit of a more just and equitable juvenile justice system in Connecticut.

Over the past few years, we have made commendable strides advancing juvenile justice reform. We have raised the age of juvenile jurisdiction¹, reduced the number of young people in the system, increased public safety, expanded community-based and school-based alternatives, and amplified youth voices, ensuring their experiences and perspectives shape our advocacy and policy recommendations.

Our work is not complete. We remain steadfast in addressing systemic inequities that persist both demanding and necessitating continued inquiry of policies and practices that promote fairness, dignity, and opportunity for all young people. Our commitment to ensuring that Connecticut's response to youth delinquency and crime is preventative, restorative, intentional, and future oriented, remains resolute



This Strategic Plan Update outlines our priorities for the coming years, focused on achieving tangible outcomes:

- **Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities:** We are committed to evaluating policies and practices regarding young people and their impact on youth of color, to eliminate disparities.
- **Enhancing Diversion and Support:** We are committed to enhance public safety by creating youth diversionary policies, practices, and trainings, supporting positive youth development and community-based accountability.
- **Improving Engagement and Success Through Education:** We will champion educational opportunities and support systems that empower justice-involved youth to achieve their full potential and disrupt the potential of more youth becoming justice involved because of their disconnection from school.

¹In 2021, Connecticut raised the minimum age of criminal responsibility (MACR) from 7 to 10 years of age through Public Act 21-174.

- **Improving Conditions of Confinement and Reentry:** We will ensure that systems and facilities are responsive to the developmental needs of youth and have programming available to prepare youth for success.
- **Promoting Youth Voice and Empowerment:** We believe that young people should have a meaningful role in shaping the policies and practices that affect them. We will continue to elevate the voices of youth and create opportunities for them to participate in decision-making processes.

We are grateful for the dedication and support of our partners, stakeholders, and community members. Together, we can create a juvenile justice system that truly fosters the best interests of our young people and our communities—a safer, more just Connecticut for all.

Sincerely,

Overview

Background: Enabling Legislation

In 2014, Public Act 14-217 established the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (JJPOC) to oversee the continued reform of the juvenile justice system.

This Committee was tasked with the following:

- Recommending changes in state law regarding juvenile justice.
- Crafting a standard definition of recidivism.
- Setting goals for reform.
- Assessing the impact of the Raise the Age legislation.
- Assessing the quality of education within the juvenile justice system.
- Planning for implementation of Results-Based Accountability (RBA) by agencies and as a juvenile justice system.
- Analyzing the existence of disproportionate minority contact (DMC) across the juvenile justice system.
- Reporting to the state on the quality and effectiveness of a variety of programs in community supervision, congregate care, diversion, behavioral health, and other areas.

The University of New Haven's Tow Youth Justice Institute supports the JJPOC through staffing, research, and coordination of efforts. The work of the JJPOC has been largely conducted through six workgroups: **Diversion, Incarceration, Racial and Ethnic Disparities (RED), Community Expertise, Education, and Cross-Agency Data Sharing**. The workgroups are comprised of state, local, private, not-for-profit, and advocacy agencies who collaboratively develop system-wide and research driven strategies to improve youth justice in the state of Connecticut.

Introduction

In response to the dynamic challenges and opportunities that Connecticut youth experience, the JJPOC, in collaboration with the Tow Youth Justice Institute, has developed **a refined five-year strategic plan (2025-2029)**. This plan builds upon the progress achieved to date and charts a clear path toward our shared vision of positive youth outcomes, safer communities, and a fair, effective, and equitable youth justice system.

This strategic plan is not merely a static document; it is a dynamic framework that has been developed to ensure our efforts remain effective and responsive to changes we have seen over time. We are confident that, through the collective efforts of our dedicated team and the implementation of this strategic plan, we will achieve safer, healthier communities, contributing to a long-term impact on the quality of life of Connecticut families for generations to come.

For each strategic objective, the respective workgroup will create an action plan, routinely measure, and review progress toward the objective, and evaluate how the objective's strategies should be adjusted and improved by reviewing its impact.

Strategic Planning Process

The strategic plan is a culmination of a comprehensive, multi-stage process guided by the collective wisdom of a broad spectrum of stakeholders. This mixed-methods approach combined quantitative survey data with the qualitative insights generated through an in-person strategic planning day and follow-up meetings. This fostered an open dialogue, ensuring the final plan truly reflects the shared vision and priorities of all involved, while addressing the current opportunities and challenges.

Process Overview:

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Input was actively gathered from a diverse range of individuals and groups, including JJPOC members, workgroup chair and members, state agencies, nonprofits, and community stakeholders. This engagement utilized a mixed-methods approach:
 - **Quantitative Data Collection:** Surveys and questionnaires gathered quantifiable data on perceptions, priorities, and needs.
 - **Qualitative Insights:** An in-person strategic planning day with group discussions and follow-up meetings fostered open dialogue, capturing nuanced perspectives, and generating innovative ideas.
- **Strategy Formulation and Synthesis:** Quantitative data was analyzed to identify trends and patterns, while qualitative insights were thematically organized to uncover key themes and opportunities. These findings were then merged to create a comprehensive understanding of the landscape and future opportunities to strengthen approaches.
- **Plan Review and Refinement:** A draft plan was circulated for feedback, allowing stakeholders to provide final input and ensure the plan's comprehensiveness and relevance.
- **Finalization and Communication:** The finalized strategic plan will be formally approved and communicated to all stakeholders, emphasizing transparency and shared ownership.

Review and Reflect: Past Strategic Plans

2024 2021 to 2024 Strategic Plan: Goal(s)

Goal 1: Limit youth entry into the justice system.

Goal 2: Reduce incarceration.

Goal 3: Reduce racial and ethnic disparities of youth in Connecticut's juvenile justice system.

Goal 4: Right-size the juvenile justice system by setting appropriate lower and upper age limits.

Ongoing Projects

Re-entry Success Plan:

Driven by the need for a more robust and effective youth reentry system, the JJPOC's Reentry Subgroup has diligently developed a comprehensive Reentry Success Plan over the past two years. Mandated by Public Act 23-188, this plan is the culmination of extensive research, including the identification of gaps in existing services and the study of successful models from other states. The Reentry Success Plan aims to consider the unique needs of each youth reentering their communities, emphasizing key areas for support such as education, employment, healthcare, behavioral health support, restorative justice, credible messengers, and housing. This holistic approach to reentry reflects a multi-agency collaboration and the plan remains a high priority for the JJPOC, leading ongoing implementation efforts to improve the reentry process for young people involved in the justice system.

Prearrest Diversion Plan

Since its inception in 2016, the JJPOC has prioritized increasing the use of diversion, leading to significant progress in diverting youth from the formal juvenile justice system in Connecticut. Key initiatives like the Community-Based Diversion System and the School-Based Diversion Initiative (SBDI) have resulted in a remarkable 31% decrease in delinquency referrals to juvenile court and a 3.5% increase in referrals to Youth Service Bureaus (YSBs) and Juvenile Review Boards (JRBs) by 2019. Building on this success, Public Act 23-188 mandates further efforts to strengthen the state's diversion system by focusing on diverting low-level offenses from the formal juvenile justice system to a community-based diversion system. The JJPOC Diversion Workgroup is actively developing this plan, with a focus on standardizing access to diversion, providing training, and considering crucial factors like service capacity and community-based accountability.

The Diversion Workgroup per legislation has prioritized this initiative to re-envision the state's approach to Diversion. As the Diversion Workgroup prepares to release its second report in 2024 outlining its recommendations for youth diversion in Connecticut, the Workgroup will continue to develop, implement, and evaluate its recommendations in partnership with community, youth, law enforcement, and youth serving partners.

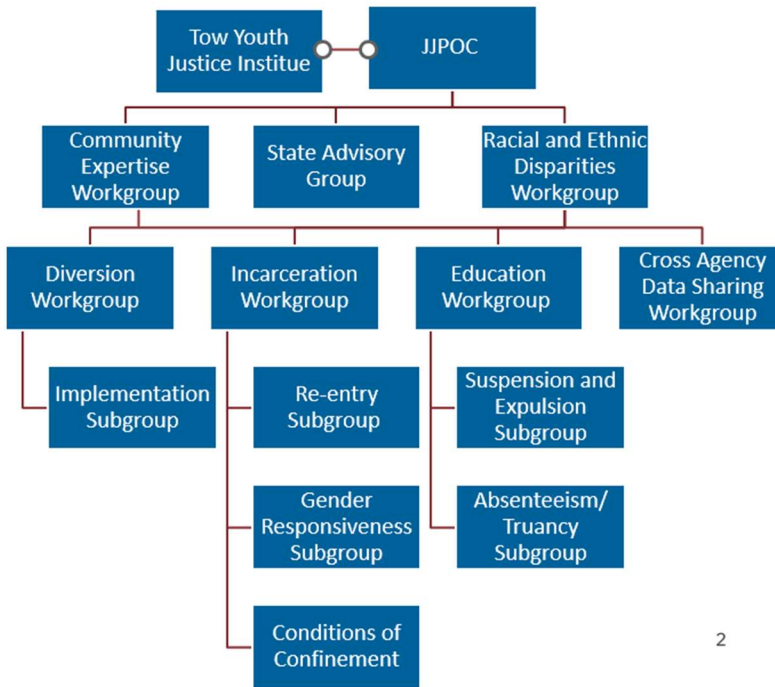
Gender Responsiveness

In 2023, in response to the concerning experiences of young multi-system involved girls, the JJPOC created the Gender Responsiveness Workgroup and charged them with conducting a landscape analysis of Connecticut systems and their provision of gender responsive programs and services.² The group has been actively supporting the development of this landscape analysis and will continue to work with both state and community partners to develop both immediate and long-term intentional solutions to gaps and barriers in our systemic response to vulnerable youth in crisis.

² Public Act No. 23-188

Going Forward: Strategic Plan 2024-2029

Structure of the JJPOC



The **Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee** with administrative support from the TYJI³ employs a multi-tiered structure to strategically address the key objectives outlined in this plan. Utilizing dedicated workgroups centered on the pivotal areas of **diversion, incarceration, and education**, along with further division into specialized subgroups, the JJPOC ensures a focused and efficient approach. The workgroups are comprised of state, local, private, not-for-profit, and advocacy agencies who collaboratively develop system-wide and research-driven strategies to improve youth justice in the state of Connecticut.

The committee also champions data-driven decision-making through the crucial **Cross Agency Data Sharing Workgroup**, which supports the informational needs of all workgroups and generates insightful annual reports. In parallel, **the Community Expertise (CEW) and Racial and Ethnic Disparities (RED)** workgroups diligently incorporate a RED lens and prioritize youth and community voices in JJPOC initiatives

³ The University of New Haven’s Tow Youth Justice Institute provides administrative support to the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (JJPOC), including staffing, research, and coordination of efforts. This support extends to the six workgroups: Diversion, Incarceration, Racial and Ethnic Disparities (RED), Community Expertise, Education, and Cross-Agency Data Sharing.

and legislative recommendations, underscoring a firm commitment to equity and meaningful youth engagement.

These structural enhancements to the JJPOC's framework reflect a thoughtful and comprehensive strategy to tackle complex issues within the juvenile justice system. By capitalizing on the expertise of its diverse workgroup membership and prioritizing data analysis, community input, and the perspectives of young people, the JJPOC strives to strategically drive positive change and facilitate improved outcomes for youth navigating the complexities of the justice system.

Strategic Plan Goals and Workgroups

Strategic Goal: Enhance Diversion and Community-Based Accountability

Workgroup: Diversion

Purpose Statement

Enhance public safety by creating youth diversionary policies, practices, and trainings, supporting positive youth development and community-base accountability

The JJPOC's Commitment to Youth Well-Being and Community-Based Accountability

The JJPOC is dedicated to fostering the healthy development of Connecticut's youth by minimizing their unnecessary involvement in the formal justice system. We are committed to a strategy that prioritizes diversion, reserving formal system involvement only for the most serious offenses and those who pose an immediate risk to public safety. This approach aligns with extensive research demonstrating that community-based diversion programs provide a more effective and supportive approach to addressing the underlying challenges that contribute to delinquent behavior. By offering a constructive alternative to traditional justice system interventions, diversion programs are appropriately geared to identify youth in need of support, facilitating seamless access to services focused on repairing harm caused to victims and the community, while simultaneously equipping youth with the skills to prevent future offenses.

Connecticut's Progress and Ongoing Efforts in Youth Diversion

Connecticut has made significant strides in reducing youth arrests, particularly through the 2018 establishment of the Community Based Diversion System and School Based Diversion Framework. These reforms positioned YSBs and JRBs as central to Connecticut's diversion system, serving as vital "service bridges" connecting families, police, schools, juvenile court, human service departments, mental health providers, and the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Despite their pivotal role, challenges including inconsistent funding and disparities in community resources across urban, rural, and suburban areas, impacting diversion service delivery and opportunity, underscoring a continued need to support, expand, and evaluate our diversionary system. The development of the Automatic Prearrest Diversion Plan, mandated by Public Act 23-188, Section 1, is a critical step in this direction.

Looking Ahead

The JJPOC is optimistic about the future and acknowledges both the progress made and the work that remains. Committed to supporting full implementation of the forthcoming Prearrest Diversion Plan, the Committee understands that achieving success is not solely determined by whether their cases are diverted but also by the quality of the diversion services youth receive once diverted. The goal of the Workgroup is to enhance public safety by creating youth diversionary policies, practices, and training supporting positive youth development and community-based accountability, ensuring a just and equitable diversion system truly serves the best interests of Connecticut's youth.

Goals & Objectives

1. **Standardize Diversion System:** Ensure youth in all communities have access to diversion programs.
2. **Develop Diversion Training:** Create, implement, and evaluate diversion trainings and curriculum in partnership with law enforcement and the community.

Learning Agenda Questions	Performance Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What are the demographics of referred youth and prevalent disparities▪ How is diversion operationalized at the municipal level and do all youth have the opportunity to be diverted?▪ Track progress and Impact: How are youth who are offered diversion faring in the short term (entering diversion and being connected to resources to support their individualized needs) and long term (avoiding subsequent involvement in the justice system,	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Reduction in youth arrests and referrals to court for low level offenses▪ Increased accessibility of diversion programs▪ Improved racial and ethnic equity in diversion outcomes▪ Positive short-term and long-term outcomes for youth who participate in diversion programs▪ Enhanced community safety▪ Collect and analyze data on the effectiveness of diversion programs

improving their well-being, and achieving other important life goals)?	to guide continuous improvement and inform resource allocation.
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Strategies

1. Standardize Diversion System so youth in all communities have access (November 2024 Plan).

- a) The Diversion First Plan is being drafted to ensure that youth in every community have access to a diversionary program, regardless of whether their municipality implements a juvenile review board.
- b) The Workgroup will develop, implement and evaluate metrics for success.

2. Create, implement, and evaluate diversion trainings and curriculum in partnership with law enforcement and community

- a) The Diversion Workgroup will partner with the State of Connecticut’s Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP), Community Expertise Workgroup (CEW), and the Connecticut Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POSTC), to develop a “Statewide Pre-Arrest Diversion Policy.
- b) The Diversion Workgroup will partner with DESPP, POSTC, and CEW, to develop a “Youth Diversion Training Curriculum” that police departments across the state would be required to complete every three years as part of the law enforcement accreditation process.
- c) The Diversion Workgroup will partner with members of the CEW to “Identify Youth and Police Engagement Training Programs ” that aim to educate young individuals on safe and effective interactions with law enforcement.

Strategic Goal: Improving Engagement and Success Through Education

Workgroup: Education

Purpose Statement

Our commitment is to reduce the risk of future youth justice system involvement by promoting equitable access to education for all youth involved in the justice system, fostering academic efficacy and achievement, and reinforcing positive educational protective factors through strategic engagement and comprehensive support.

The JJPOC is focused on advancing a future where children at risk of involvement with the juvenile justice system are provided with optimal conditions for learning.

Youth in the juvenile justice system face significant challenges in educational engagement, performance, and outcomes. Their unique and varied educational needs, coupled with their sometimes-transient nature, create obstacles that can hinder or even prevent them from consistently accessing education. Research shows contact with the juvenile justice system is linked to a myriad of challenges that tend to lead to undesirable educational outcomes. For example, arrest has been linked to higher school dropout rates and lower levels of college enrollment, while placement in a juvenile residential facility has been linked to lower rates of high school completion and increased odds of criminal involvement as an adult. Historically, the education system has played a pivotal role in youth's interactions with the criminal justice system, sometimes serving as the entry point for young people into the system. By improving support and oversight of the use of school discipline and our school's reengagement response for youth with attendance issues, we aim to empower all Connecticut youth to achieve their full potential and contribute positively to their communities, decreasing their chance of interaction with the juvenile justice system.

The JJPOC remains dedicated to improving educational outcomes for justice-involved youth in Connecticut.

The JJPOC, established with a clear mandate to prioritize education, has been instrumental in driving policy changes and reforms to address the barriers faced by justice-involved youth in accessing education. Through legislative recommendations and advocacy, the JJPOC has worked to improve coordination, supervision, and provision of academic services for young people. Recent legislation, including Public Act 18-31 and Public Act 21-174⁴, has further strengthened this commitment, establishing an Education Workgroup within the JJPOC and requiring the DCF to create a dedicated administrative unit to oversee and monitor the provision of education of

⁴ See P.A. 24-24 §19.

children in juvenile justice system facilities or who are incarcerated.⁵ Keeping both the education and varied infrastructures of confinement accountable for students' success.

Looking Ahead

Connecticut is dedicated to ensuring that all children, regardless of their circumstances, have access to high-quality educational programming. Through continued collaboration, strategic planning, and data-driven decision-making, we strive to create a brighter future for young people. This strategic goal focuses on enhancing educational access and support, strengthening collaboration and accountability, and addressing systemic barriers to create a more just and equitable educational system for all youth in Connecticut. By prioritizing education and addressing systemic inequities, we aim to break the cycle of justice system involvement and provide quality education and support to guide youth toward positive outcomes.

Goals & Objectives

1. **Reduce chronic absenteeism and truancy rates** statewide through early identification, targeted interventions, and improved data tracking.
2. **Reduce the Use of Discipline in Schools** and support schools in implementing restorative practices and alternative appropriate responses.
3. **Ensure the provision of quality education to youth in justice facilities meets their educational needs and prepares them for educational success upon return.** Review facility education provision in justice facilities through DCF-JJEU and review efforts, metrics, and success.

Learning Agenda Questions	Performance Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are the best practices to improve and expand effective interventions for chronic absenteeism? ▪ What trends in LEAP data can inform strategies to increase attendance? ▪ How can we effectively collaborate with or remain informed of progress in CCM's Strategic Plan: "Young People First", developed through the 119K Commission? ▪ Are the educational needs of youth in facilities being met? Monitor and oversee the provision of education services to youth in all juvenile justice facilities. Explore ways to enhance oversight and ensure quality education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased school attendance and graduation rates for justice-involved youth. ▪ Increased school attendance rates for youth with unexcused absences ▪ Increased proactive responses from school districts for youth who are disengaging ▪ Improved time of connection between school and YSB to engage YSB support for students ▪ Positive trends in LEAP data related to attendance. ▪ Improved educational outcomes for youth in justice facilities, including increased engagement, academic

⁵Conn. Gen. Stat. § 17a-3b

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why are students being suspended and expelled? Review these offenses. ▪ What is the rate of recidivism for kids who have been in juvenile justice facilities, and what are their eventual graduation and diploma rates? 	<p>progress, successful transitions back to community schools and educational attainment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Decreased use of exclusionary discipline statewide. ▪ Increased use of restorative practices by school districts
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Strategies

1. **Education Goals Strategic Planning:** Reduce chronic absenteeism and truancy statewide thereby increasing school attendance.
 - a) Review the impact of chronic absenteeism legislation
 - b) Review and streamline referral processes for chronic absenteeism, ensuring timely intervention. Evaluate YSB response to absenteeism
 - c) Analyze LEAP (Local Education Agency Profiles) data to identify trends and areas for improvement.
 - d) Continue collaboration and information sharing between the workgroup and CCM's Strategic Plan: "Young People First", developed through the 119K Commission.

2. **Reduce the Use of Discipline in Schools**
 - a) Review and expand the SBDI to provide alternatives to exclusionary discipline
 - b) Assess and strengthen CSDE's (Connecticut State Department of Education) role in guiding and supporting municipalities with disproportionate use of exclusionary discipline.
 - c) Increase utilization of restorative practices and de-escalation alternative programs in schools.
 - d) Analyze data on school-based arrests and expulsions, cross-referencing with municipal arrest data to identify disparities and areas for intervention.

3. **Review facility education provision in justice facilities through DCF-JJEU and review efforts, metrics, and success, to ensure the provision of quality education to youth in justice facilities meets their educational needs and prepares them for educational success upon return.**
 - a) Increase metrics and measurement of success for students longitudinally
 - b) Ensure that educational services in justice facilities are aligned with the state's academic standards and prepare youth for successful re-entry into community schools.

Strategic Goal: Improve Conditions of Confinement and Reentry

Workgroup: Incarceration

Purpose Statement

Ensure systems and facilities are responsive to the developmental needs of youth and have programming available that provides a pathway for youth to thrive and be successful in life.

The strategic goal for incarceration is to create a system that prioritizes the well-being and successful reintegration of youth. We are dedicated to ensuring that systems and facilities are not only safe and humane but also actively promote healthy development. Recognizing the unique needs of young people and their critical stage of development, we are committed to developmentally responsive practices, including practices that tailor interventions and programs to support youths' physical, emotional, and cognitive growth. Our approach will focus on treating children as children, ensuring they receive appropriate services, and providing opportunities for education and skill-building. This approach will aim to support and empower young people to thrive and contribute positively to their communities.

Continuous Improvement: Encouraging Collaboration for Positive Outcomes. The call to remove youth from adult facilities underscores a growing understanding of the unique needs of young people within the justice system. We recognize that the developmental differences between youth and adults necessitate age-appropriate rehabilitation strategies. While developing and implementing a comprehensive plan to transition youth out of adult facilities will require time and dedicated effort, we firmly believe that immediate improvements within the Department of Correction (DOC) facilities where youth charged as adults are currently incarcerated, are both possible and necessary. We are committed to fostering collaboration and constructive dialogue among all stakeholders to achieve these improvements. Our goal is to find solutions that prioritize the safety and well-being of young people, while also recognizing the complexities of the justice system. We are committed to breaking the cycle of incarceration and creating a brighter future for all youth in Connecticut.

Goals & Objectives

- 1. Ensure appropriate conditions of confinement for youth development.**
- 2. All youth leaving facilities have the identified individual supports desired and necessary for success.**
- 3. Programs, services, and system responses are gender responsive.**

Learning Agenda Questions	Performance Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How can we further improve reporting and data collection mechanisms to ensure transparency and accountability in facilities housing youth? ▪ What are the most effective strategies for reducing the use of restraints and chemical agents in youth facilities? ▪ What are the most effective strategies for reducing future contact with the system among youth who have been incarcerated? ▪ What are the gender responsive needs of youth involved in the justice system? ▪ How can staff be trained to interact with youth in a trauma-informed and culturally responsive manner? ▪ What structural and substantive changes can be implemented to create a more developmentally supportive environment? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased reporting and data collection from facilities housing youth. ▪ Regular oversight and monitoring visits to facilities ▪ Implementation of a standardized chemical agent and restraint reporting. ▪ Implementation of recommendations from the Reentry Success Plan. ▪ Implementation of gender-responsive practices throughout the system. ▪ Development and evaluation of a quality assurance system for reentry to understand reentry success and redefine what success looks like. ▪ Reduction in the use of restraints and chemical agents in youth facilities. ▪ Improved mental and physical health outcomes for youth in custody ▪ Positive feedback from youth and staff regarding the facility environment and staff interactions

Strategies

1. Ensure appropriate conditions of confinement for youth development.

- a) Increase reporting requirements to JJPOC from facilities that house youth
 - a. Increase data collection from DOC/JBCSSD
 - b. JJPOC to receive conditions of confinement data in addition to OCA
 - c. Review adherence of DOC to DOJ settlement
- b) Increase JJPOC oversight and monitoring of facilities that serve youth, including REGIONS and MYI and YCI.
 - a. Review facility conditions by visiting facilities and speaking with youth
 - b. Hold at least one meeting a year at MYI/YCI (Detention centers, REGIONS, etc.)
 - c. Look into what rec space looks like, and for how long, how many hours, it is utilized/accessed
- c) Develop a chemical agent and restraint reporting form that includes incident, summary and report, the staff involved, how long the incident went on for,

number of incidents within the month, and a report out from mental health counselor that spoke with youth.

- a. Develop a form that for when response to incidents is positive and doesn't involve chemical agents/use of restraints
- b. Explore the training and education provided to the staff at MYI as part of how they interact with youth to assist in deescalating situations before a restraint or chemical agent is used.
- d) Review of availability of education programs, may come in partnership with education workgroup, education provided in facilities, special education services

2. All youth leaving facilities have the individual supports desired and necessary for success.

- a) Oversee Implementation of Reentry Success Plan recommendations.
 - a. Recommended Strategy #1: Coordinate and Expand Reentry Supports for Connecticut's Youth
 - b. Recommended Strategy #2: Expand Access to Mentorship
 - c. Recommended Strategy #3: Improve Education Transition Planning and Monitoring
 - d. Recommended Strategy #4: Provide Access to Meaningful Vocational and Employment Opportunities
 - e. Recommended Strategy #5: Address Mental Health Service Gaps and Substance Use Treatment and Recovery Supports
 - f. Recommended Strategy #6: Increase and Expand Transition Supports
 - g. Recommended Strategy #7: Address Barriers to Transportation
 - h. Recommended Strategy #8: Expand Access to Housing Options
 - i. Recommended Strategy #9: Improve the Use of Restorative Justice Practices
 - j. Recommended Strategy #10: Develop a Quality Assurance System and Identify Key Funding Sources for the Reentry Success Plan
- b) Evaluation – reporting of QA framework

3. Programs, services, and system responses are gender responsive.

- a) Create gender responsiveness landscape analysis
- b) Develop gap assessment of landscape analysis
- c) Identify solutions to gaps
- d) Review implementation of Special GR recommendations

Strategic Goal: Reduce Racial and Ethnic Disparities in All Areas of the Legal System

Workgroup: Racial and Ethnic Disparities (RED)

Purpose Statement

Analyze policies and practices for their equitable implementation and effectiveness for all youth in Connecticut.

We are committed to evaluating the application of police response and legal policies and practices regarding young people and their impact on youth of color, to eliminate disparities.

The primary objective of this workgroup is to proactively address racial and ethnic disparities entrenched within and tangentially connected to the juvenile justice system. Despite an overall decline in youth incarceration, persistent racial and ethnic disparities remain, indicating that youth of color are disproportionately impacted at multiple points of contact with the justice system. While youth incarceration, regardless of race or ethnicity, is detrimental to the well-being of young people, achieving equitable outcomes requires genuine collaboration with communities of color, ensuring that their perspectives are central to both the interpretation of data and the formulation of solutions. We are dedicated to ensuring that the interpretation and development of race and ethnicity data, as well as strategies to address disparities within the juvenile justice system, are conducted in genuine partnership with communities of color. We will also ensure the thorough collection, review, and transparent public reporting of race and ethnicity data at every crucial point of contact within the system. Serving as an assessment workgroup for the JJPOC, we will conduct racial equity impact statements on all recommendations put forth and use the available data to make intentional and directed outreach to support communities with high disparities.

Strategic Goal: Ensure That the Work of JJPOC and its Workgroups is Led by Data and Accuracy

Workgroup: Cross Agency Data Sharing

Purpose Statement

To support comprehensive data requests from the JJPOC Workgroups and the JJPOC Committee, as well as to support annual state agency presentations and prepare the annual state of the system report.

The JJPOC recognizes the critical need to inform its efforts and effectiveness through data. The Cross Agency Data Sharing Workgroup is an extremely unique workgroup that pulls together data experts in their relative fields and agencies to respond to the data inquiries of the Committee and the Workgroups exploring specific initiatives and understanding outcomes.

Strategic Goal: Promote Youth Voice and Empowerment

Workgroup: Community Expertise

Purpose Statement

To empower youth, families, and communities to shape JJPOC decision-making, ensuring the voices and perspectives of those most impacted are at the forefront and valued.

The JJPOC recognizes that genuine reform is only possible through authentic partnership with those most impacted by the system.

We seek to ensure youth, families, victims, and communities have a meaningful and sustained voice in shaping youth justice policy. This goes beyond merely listening to stories; it involves fostering true collaboration where lived experience directly informs decision-making. Welcoming diverse and inclusive perspectives the Community Expertise Workgroup—composed of individuals with firsthand experience of policies in action, will actively inform and educate JJPOC members, and guide JJPOC policies and legislative recommendations. This group will examine existing practices to encourage and support authentic community participation. We are committed to shifting the culture, ensuring that directly impacted youth and communities are naturally integrated

into all aspects of the Committee's work. This will ensure that the JJPOC's work is truly reflective of the needs and aspirations of those it serves.

Goals

- **Authentic Partnership:** Move beyond passive listening to active collaboration, allowing lived experience to guide policy recommendations
- **Foster Collaboration:** Build bridges and improve communication between policy makers and the communities they serve.

Strategies

1. Review all JJPOC recommendations
2. Create workshop trainings for young people on social justice civic and engagement
3. Partner with TYJI to prepare youth who would like to attend and participate at the JJPOC meetings.
 - a.) Assign and match youth with an adult JJPOC member.
4. Conduct surveys to gather community insights and develop recommendations based on identified themes.
5. Create an annual Youth Report to highlight their perspectives and experiences.
6. Explore developing a summer civic engagement academy to further empower youth.
7. Collaborate with JJPOC Workgroups to ensure youth, family, and community voices are reflected in their conversations and proposals.

Conclusion

The JJPOC recognizes that investment in Connecticut’s young people is an investment in our future. The Committee is committed to engaging stakeholders with all perspectives on the issues it takes up, to thoroughly understand matters and pursue true solutions. The Committee recognizes the time and commitment by its members to do this very important work and looks forward to the future.

Quality Assurance Framework

<p>Measuring JJPOC Policy Impact</p> <p>Evaluate JJPOC legislation for its impact Redefine how we measure success to include, when appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved Housing Stability Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance Credit attainment Suspension and Expulsions Re arrest Re incarceration Re Diversion Self-reported quality of life Physical health Mental Health Financial stability Racial Equity Impact Statements <p>Annual Review System Trends with a lens toward RED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reentry Success Quality Assurance Reports Annual Conditions of Confinement Reports OJJDP SAG Reports Annual State of the System Report
<p>Measuring JJPOC internal engagement and movement towards strategic plan</p> <p>Annual report on measures that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many stakeholders engaged How many meetings held How many data presentations held How many youths engaged How was community feedback incorporated Strategic initiatives started Strategic initiatives completed

Appendices

Legislation: 2021 to 2024

Legislation 2024

- Public Act 24-139: An Act Concerning Recommendations From The Juvenile Policy And Oversight Committee

Legislation 2023

- Public Act No. 23-167: An Act Concerning Transparency In Education,
- Public Act No. 23-188: An Act Concerning Juvenile Justice

Legislation 2022

- Public Act 22-47: An Act Concerning The Recommendations Of The Juvenile Justice Policy And Oversight Committee

Legislation 2021

- Public Act No, 21-174: An Act Concerning The Recommendations Of The Juvenile Justice Policy And Oversight Committee
- Public Act No. 21-104: An Act Concerning Court Operations