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July

JJPOC Meeting Minutes

July 18, 2024

2:00 PM- 3:30 PM

Zoom Web Based Meeting

Attendance

TONI WALKER	MAURICE REAVES
HERIBERTO CAJIGAS	ELIZABETH BOZZUTO
GARY ROBERGE	DERRICK GORDON
SARAH EAGAN	JOSHUA BERNEGGER
MELANIE DYKAS	TALITHA COGGINS
JILLIAN GILCHREST	MICHAEL C. WILLIAMS
CHRISTINA QUARANTA	PAUL CICARELLA
TAMMY NQUYEN-O'DOWD	SARAH EAGAN
CECI MAHER	VERNON BEAULIEU

TYJI Staff

BRITTANY LAMARR
ARYANA AGLI
BILL CARBONE
PAUL KLEE
KATIUSHKA RUIZ
EVA OTT HILL
JAMIE PERKINS
CRYSTAL CHEN
DANIELLE COOPER
ABBY DARLING

Welcome and Introductions

Representative Toni Walker welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Overview of the Meeting

The July monthly meeting will involve an update, by Connecticut Youth Services Alliance, of Youth Service Bureaus and Juvenile Review Boards, as well as an overview of the Pre-Arrest Diversion Plan passed by the Diversion Workgroup earlier this month.

Acceptance of JJPOC Meeting Minutes

Representative Toni Walker asked for a motion to accept the May 16th, 2024, meeting minutes. The motion was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.

Updates

The Tow Youth Justice Institute shared that the JJPOC held their Strategic Planning Day on Monday, July 15th, 2024. TYJI is currently working to go through feedback from that day and compile suggestions into a survey which will be sent out to JJPOC members on August 1st. These surveys will be used to make decisions on the priorities of the JJPOC for the next five years. The JJPOC will vote on the final strategic plan on October 17th, 2024.



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TYJI also announced that JJPOC has signed contracts with new providers for the Community Expertise Workgroup. These providers are Love 146, Our Piece of the Pie, Next Level Empowerment, The Center for Children's Advocacy, and the Connecticut Justice Alliance. Each group introduced themselves and their work to the committee.

YSB/JRB Presentation- Connecticut Youth Services Association

CYSA oversees 102 Youth Service Bureaus (YSBs) and 90 Juvenile Review Boards (JRBs) which serve around 135 communities. As a review, YSBs are a part of Connecticut's Support System for youth and families, they are directly mandated to serve the purposes outlined in State Statute 10-19m.

Currently, state funding residing with DCF, comprises about 2%-50% of a YSB's annual budget, depending on the size and need of the YSB. The remainder of the budget is comprised of municipal funding and leveraged grants. The base grant for YSBs is around \$2.7 million, though this amount fluctuates based on a legacy formula. In general, each YSB receives \$14,000 annually which is matched by the communities that the YSB serves. In addition to a base grant, YSBs can receive an enhancement grant of around \$1.1 million based on population. This number does not grow as more YSBs are created, so the appropriations for each individual YSB decrease over time. In the 2024 Financial Year, YSB enhancement grants ranged from \$5,679-\$18,856.

To review, a Juvenile Review Board (JRB) is a community-based diversion strategy in Connecticut. Most JRBs fall under the YSB's jurisdiction, however 10% are run by other entities

In the 2024 Financial year, the state granted around \$1.7 million to the Juvenile Review Boards, with Bridgeport, Hartford, and New Haven receiving the majority of the funding. In addition to the aforementioned state grant, some JRBs receive smaller amounts of funding (\$,500-\$35,000) from DCF.

Under the current community-based diversion system, The YSBs coordinate Community Bases Interventions and more clinical care for mental health, substance use, and behavioral health.

At this point in the presentation, CYSA presented YSB and JRB Data from the 2024 Financial Year. They prefaced this section of the presentation with a reminder that CYSA has limited access to data outside of the YSBs which has impeded their ability to identify trends, track progress, and provide meaningful outcome-related information.

To begin, CYSA outlined the new Data Collection process for the YSBs and JRBs. Prior to this update, individual YSBs would submit their individual data to DCF who would manually compile it with the data from all the other YSBs in the state. CYSA has worked with DCF's data consultants to streamline data collection. Now, most YSBs are using software like Google or Veloci to contribute to a singular database. CYSA is hopeful that this process will open new opportunities for advancement like a data dashboard that would be a resource for both local and statewide stakeholders. In addition, CYSA is excited to share that they now can release data quarterly instead of annually. On the community level, CYSA is now sharing data with the schools, the primary point of reference for YSBs. Additionally, some YSBs and JRBs are working with the Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division to receive data on prior offending youth through a memorandum of understanding. In the future, CYSA hopes to gain access to p2OWIN data which will identify community level services and supports that are improving interventions, outcomes, and prevention efforts for youth served by YSBs, and JRBs.

In Financial Year 2024, YSBs around the state have served 231,209 tier one youth. They held 860 large group events which drew 180,188 participants. Additionally, the YSBs held 1,899 short term programs which attracted 51,021 participants. These programs ranged in topics such as life skills, parent education, job skills/employment, alcohol/drug education, conflict resolution, anger management, as well as other skills. YSBs also served 20,770 Tier 2 youth during Financial Year 2024, the majority of which were referred by parents/guardians. The most common primary reason for referral was PYD, and CYSA was excited to note that 21% of tier 2 youth served self-referred.

During Financial Year 2024, YSBs and JRBs worked with 3,254 total collaborators varying from youth service agencies, business/community, schools, nonprofits, town officials and departments, health professionals, and police departments

Regarding ethnicity, most of the youth referred to JRBs in the 2024 Financial Year were white males aged 13-15 years old. The majority of youth referred to the JRBs had been suspended, but not expelled, and the majority reported that they did not have a special needs status. The most common referral reason was a breach of peace incident. Finally, 84% of youth that were referred to the JRB successfully completed the program.

Beginning in June 2023, CYSA conducted a JRB Pilot Program to implement recommendations from the council of state governments IOYouth Project. The pilot locations were Bridgeport, Hartford, Waterbury, Naugatuck, Norwich, and Wethersfield. The committee was informed that the timeline for this project was delayed due to issues with funding, but planning began in October 2022, with the pilot launching from June 2023-2024, feedback has been collected and a Final Process Evaluation Report has been released in early July.

The Final Process Evaluation Report assessed the sites' ability to implement the Youth Diversion Team (YDT) program based on the CYSA standard protocols and procedures for Youth Diversion Teams Manual, how they promoted awareness of the program, and how easy it was for youth and families as well as panel members and referring agencies to utilize the process. During the 2024 Financial Year, the JRBs receives 271 referrals, and 216 cases were closed. The full Final Process Report is included in the appendix which has been sent out to JJPOC members.

Based on this pilot, CYSA made a few suggestions to amend JRBs in the state of Connecticut. To begin, CYSA would like to enhance resource investments and training and evaluation processes for continuous monitoring of the JRBs. CYSA would also like to implement additional training to improve victim engagement in the process and create a standardized and clear process of eligibility criteria and functions of a YDT for referring agencies. Finally, they would like to enhance continuing education training and or refreshers for staff, panel members and referring agencies and create protocols with a clear definition, objectives and core features of a restorative practices model.

CYSA then began to accept questions regarding their presentation. A question was raised regarding how CYSA had measured success in case outcomes. CYSA said that for a case to be considered successful, the youth must repair harm that was identified, address behaviors that lead to the incident that caused referral, and in most cases, youth are required to meet directly with those whom their actions had harmed. Other topics of discussion included reporting requirements for YSBs, equity of fund distribution, and the representativeness of the population surveyed. Concern was specifically raised because of the 216 youth that completed the program, only 22 were surveyed. This was because of the tight timeframe, as well as the need to ask for parent permission before surveying the youth. The committee also raised concern regarding the access YSBs have to community-based diversion as well as how the proposed data dashboard would compare to the equity dashboard passed by the JJPOC last year, as well as how eligibility for YSBs and JRBs is determined. Concern was also raised that DCF had collected the data used in CYSA's presentation. DCF responded saying that when they inherited the YSBs and JRBs in 2018-2019, they also inherited the data sharing system developed by SDE. Since DCF funds the YSBs and JRBs, they worked collaboratively on the data for this presentation.

Representative Toni Walker reminded the JJPOC that there was another presentation for today's meeting, and in the essence of time, they needed to move on, but she closed by conveying her frustration with the task of evaluating the YSBs and JRBs when a lot of information is still missing. Specifically, she would have liked more information on recidivism rates of the youth served by the YSBs and JRBs.



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Pre-Arrest Diversion Plan Update-

Due to time constraints, this presentation will be presented in September.

Next Meeting:

Hybrid Model Option (In person and available over zoom)

September 19th, 2024

2:00 – 4:00 PM