



Making connections. Informing solutions.

JJPOC Monthly Meeting Agenda

Date: March 20th, 2025

Time: 2:00PM-3:30PM

Location: LOB Room 2C / Via Zoom

Viewing Options [YouTube](#) or [CT-N](#)

Welcome and Introductions

Representative Toni Walker
Undersecretary Daniel Karpowitz

Overview of Meeting and
Announcements

Brittany LaMarr

DCF Report on JJPOC
Gender Responsiveness
Recommendations

Jodi Hill-Lilly, Commissioner, DCF;
Dr. Nicole Taylor, Office of Behavioral
Health & Wellbeing, Chief
Administrator;
Maribel Martinez, Clinical & Community
Support, Senior Administrator

DOC Report on JJPOC
Reentry Recommendations

Tammy Perreault, Deputy Warden, MYI

JBCSSD Report on JJPOC Reentry
Recommendations

Catherine Foley Geib, Director of Juvenile
Clinical, Education & Residential
Services, JBCSDD

Next Meeting: April 17th, 2025



Making connections. Informing solutions.



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University of New Haven

Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee

March 20, 2025

2:00PM – 3:30PM

Legislative Office Building, Room 2C

Zoom Option available

Agenda

Welcome and Introductions

Rep. Toni Walker/Undersecretary Daniel Karpowitz

Overview of Meeting & Announcements

Brittany LaMarr, University of New Haven, TYJI

**DCF Report on JJPOC Gender
Responsive Recommendations**

**Jodi Hill-Lilly, Commissioner, DCF;
Dr. Nicole Taylor, Office of Behavioral Health & Wellbeing, Chief
Administrator;
Maribel Martinez, Clinical & Community Support, Senior
Administrator**

DOC Report on JJPOC Reentry Recommendations

Tammy Perreault, Deputy Warden, MYI

JBCSSD Report on JJPOC Reentry Recommendations

**Catherine Foley Geib, Director of Juvenile Clinical, Education &
Residential Services, JBCSDD**

In January 2025, JJPOC Members approved the following recommendations. This presentation is the DCF, DOC, and JBCSSD direct response to the recommendations as passed.

Gender Responsive Recommendation 2: DCF will submit to JJPOC by March 1, 2025 on how many calls it receives of possible/suspected child sexual abuse, including reports of abuse and neglect in out of home care settings; how many of those are substantiated; how many calls it receives of possible/suspected child sexual abuse are referred to regional multidisciplinary teams (MDTs); and any gaps in access to or capacity of the MDT system to meet the need.

Incarceration, Reentry Recommendation 1: Transition Supports

JBCSSD and DOC should submit to JJPOC by March 1, 2025, how much of the items listed below are happening, how many youth are utilizing the supports, what number of youth and families need the below services, and what is the difference between the demand for the below items. Additionally, they should ask families their need for the below items and submit an officially recorded anecdote on the utilization and need, to demonstrate barriers, considerations, and opportunities. DOC and JBCSSD may also identify, or offer suggestions of their own, for potential funding reallocations to support the items below. They should identify how many youth leave their facilities on supervision and end of sentence, and any appropriate or necessary partnership to deliver the provision of services below.

- a. When a youth is admitted to a facility or contracted program, necessary transportation assistance to the youth's identified family to visit the young person at the facility or contracted program at least twice a month.
- b. The need for flex funds to support families in need for up to 6 months following a youth's return home. Support may include but is not limited to housing assistance, basic needs, transportation, and vocational training.
- c. The need for flex funds to youth and their family the ability to relocate if needed for safety reasons. Funds may cover moving, basic needs, and initial housing payments.

Incarceration, Reentry Recommendation 2: Vocational and Employment Support

JBCSSD and DOC should submit to JJPOC by March 1, 2025, a list of vocational/employment programming they have and the limitations to connecting youth to opportunities in the community. They should provide an explanation on how they are connecting youth, and how many, to these opportunities prior to release.

- a. Additionally, DOC and JBCSSD should identify the individual at each facility who is responsible for knowing the youth who are in job related activities, their release date, and how many youth released have an employer and/or connected to a vocational program.
- b. Finally, DOC and JBCSSD should outline strategies and opportunities to address current limitations or inefficiencies in connecting youth to employment/testing/opportunities prior to release and during their time in facility.

DCF data for JJPOC March 2025

DCF Reports with a Sexual Abuse Allegation
CY 2024 (Jan-Dec)

CY 2024 Reports to DCF Careline



**All Abuse/Neglect
Allegations**

65,127



All Accepted

30,318



**Sexual Abuse
Allegation (SAA)**

1,893



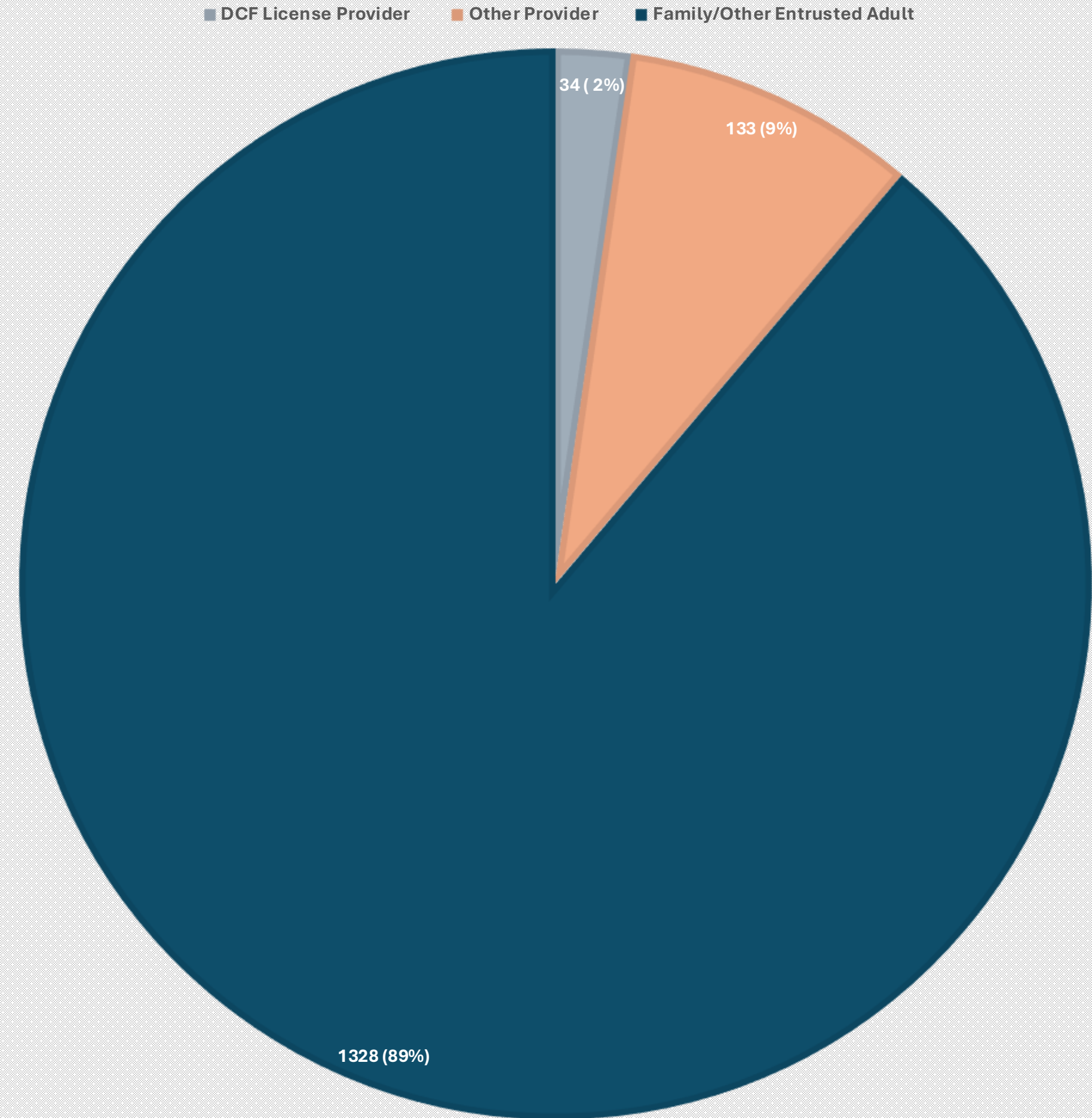
SAA Accepted

1,495*

*Accepted reports with sexual abuse allegations are 5% of all accepted

CY 2024 Accepted Reports with a Sexual Abuse Allegation Total: 1495

- Of the total, those about a DCF Licensed Provider: 34
 - DCF Foster/Adoptive Home: 19
 - CPA Home: 4
 - DCF Facility/Cottage: 5
 - Private Agency: 4
 - Business: 1
 - Other Governmental Agency: 1
- Of the total, those about an Other Provider: 133
 - School: 114
 - Day Care Facility: 12
 - Medical Provider: 4
 - Unidentified: 3

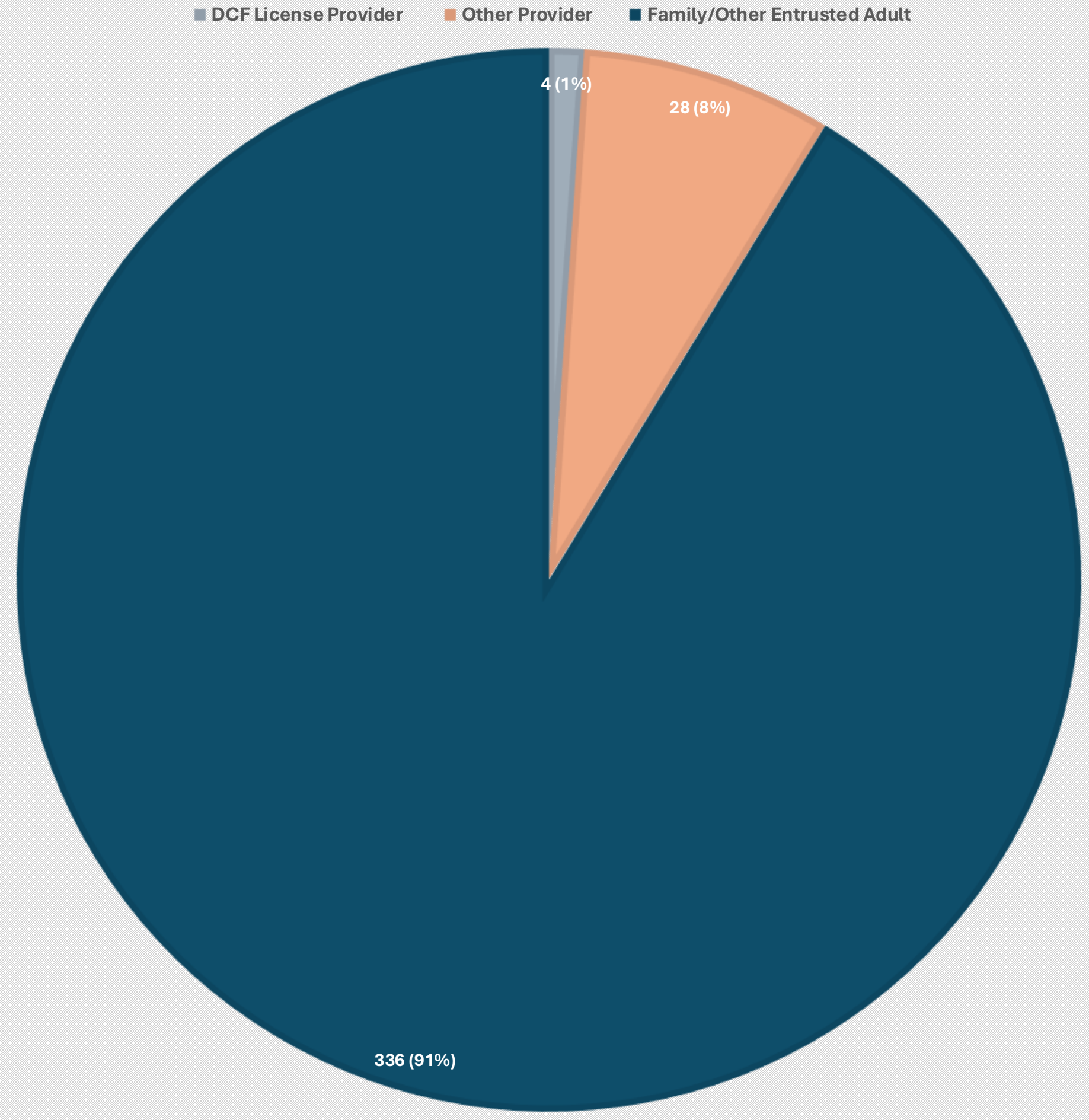


CY 2024 Accepted Reports with a Sexual Abuse Allegation Substantiation

Total: 368

24% of the 1495 accepted reports with a sexual abuse allegation are substantiated

- **Of the total, those about a DCF Licensed Provider: 4**
 - **DCF Foster/Adoptive Home: 2**
 - **CPA Home: 2**
- **Of the total, those about an Other Provider: 28**
 - **School: 26**
 - **Day Care Facility: 1**
 - **Medical Provider: 1**



CY 2024 DCF Referrals to MDT (Multidisciplinary Teams) Information based on CCA (CT Children's Alliance) annual data



DCF **referrals** to MDT
1808*



CAC
1291



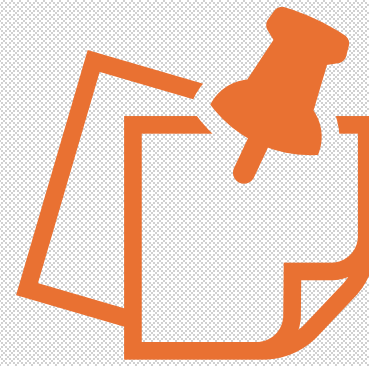
Other services
1400

*DCF referrals to MDT of Sexual Abuse Allegations = 1410
DCF referrals to MDT of Other abuse/neglect = 398

- Referrals made from DCF to MDT, are in close alignment with the number of sexual abuse reports received by DCF.
- Referrals are made to MDT regardless if the report was accepted or not accepted by DCF for DCF investigation.
- Referrals can also be made to MDT at any point in the life of a case opened with DCF.
- Referrals to MDT can include sexual abuse allegations, human trafficking, several physical abuse/neglect and fatalities.
- MDTs may refer families to CAC and/or other services. Some families may already have completed interviews and/or have services in place and therefore, the referral is made just for MDT.
- CAC (Child Advocacy Clinics) may refer families to other services.

Gaps in access to or capacity of the MDT system to meet the need

MDT



Information based on CCA (CT Children’s Alliance) annual Outcome Measurement Surveys and CAC community assessments.

- ***Lack of resources to support forensic interviews for other forms of abuse/neglect outside of sexual abuse. Current legislation, allows the state to only provide funding for forensic interviews in cases of potential sexual abuse.***
- ***Reimbursement for forensic interviews, administered by the Office of Victim Services for sexual abuse, has not been increased by the state for over a decade.***
- ***Need for additional resources to support the CAC advocacy and clinical needs of cases referred to the CACs. This is both due to the increased demand of cases and that funding for CACs has not changed for over 15 years.***
- ***Need for standardized referrals from all MDT partners across the state.***



Juvenile Justice Policy and
Oversight Committee
Workgroup
Recommendations
Manson Youth Institution

March 20, 2025

MYI Population Overview

▶ Population count : 296

- ▶ 18-21: 258
- ▶ 15-17: 38
 - 15: 2
 - 16: 10
 - 17: 26

▶ Legal status

- ▶ 18-21 Accused: 164
- ▶ 18-21 Sentenced: 93
 - ✓ **18-21: Federal Hold: 1**
- ▶ 15-17 Accused: 33
- ▶ 15-17 Sentenced: 5

Recommendation 1: Transitions Supports

JBCSSD and DOC should submit to JJPOC by March 1, 2025, how much of the items listed below are happening and what is the delta between the demand for the below items. Additionally, they should ask at least families what they need and submit an officially recorded anecdote on the utilization of the below items to demonstrate barriers, considerations, and opportunities. DOC and JBCSSD should identify, or offer suggestions of their own, for a trade-off reallocation.

- a. When a youth is admitted to a facility or contracted program, necessary transportation assistance to the youth’s identified family to visit the young person at the facility or contracted program at least twice a month.
- b. Flex funds to provide support for families in need for up to 6 months following a youth’s return home. Support may include but is not limited to housing assistance, basic needs, transportation, and vocational training.
- c. Flex funds to provide youth and their family the ability to relocate if needed for safety reasons. Funds may cover moving, basic needs, and initial housing payments.

Survey Questions	Youth response	Family Member response
Would someone in your family benefit from transportation assistance to MYI to visit you?	Yes - 14	Yes - 16
Would you or your family benefit from funds to provide support for 6 months?	Yes - 12	Yes - 12
Would it be helpful for you or your family to receive funds if relocated for safety reasons?	Yes- 12	Yes- 19

- ❖ 38 Youth completed the survey
- ❖ 26 of 36 Families completed the survey
- ❖ Survey questions added to MYI Re-Entry Intake Assessment and Family Engagement Meeting Survey.
- ❖ All participants indicated that Uber cards would be beneficial as some visitors don’t have reliable transportation.

Potential Barriers

- ▶ Discharge from court without notice/time to plan.
- ▶ Many of the youth age out into the adult population.
- ▶ In 2024, 45 of the 103 admitted youth turned 18. Will the services be extended to the youth who become adults?
- ▶ Concerns for affordable housing in the towns they want to relocate to.
- ▶ Of the 5 currently sentenced, 2 youth will be 17 years of age at time of discharge. Both of the youth and their families declined the need for all services listed.
- ▶ Some families indicated the level of need would vary from moving costs, relocating to another state and agreed they could use support with basic needs.
- ▶ Currently DOC does not have flex funds for transportation assistance or relocation and basic needs.

When asked if they would be interested in Transitional Living Program:

Yes - 10
 No - 25
 Maybe- 2

When asked if they would like to relocate the youth responded:

Yes - 20
 • In state - 12
 • Out of state - 8
 No - 13
 Maybe - 4

CY 2024

Admissions

Admission Types	Count
Accused	92
Federal/Other	1
Remands	1
Sentenced	9
Total	103

Youth Data

Remands

Remand Release Type	Violation Type	Count
TS	Tech	1
Total		1

Releases & Discharges

Movement Description	Category	Count
DISCHARGED - END OF SENTENCE	END OF SENTENCE	5
TRANSFER TO TRANS SUPERV	TS	8
Total		13

Unsentenced Discharges

Movement Description	Count
DISCHARGED, DID NOT RETURN FROM COURT	39
UNSENTENCED DISCHARGE ON BOND	6
Total	45

Meeting the needs

❖ Surveys to identify needs completed with youth and families

❖ Re-Entry Intake assessments

❖ Family Engagement meetings
Communication and coordination regarding needs with Probation and Connecticut Judicial Branch
Referrals to Department of Children and Families, Department of Housing, Department of Labor

Partnership with DCF Juvenile Justice Education Unit to assist students' transition to the school in their community

Invictus - DOMUS Kids

- Sentenced male offenders aged 17-26 returning to Norwalk and Stamford
- End of sentence (6-12 months before EOS)
- Provide in-reach prior to release; post-release the young men and women in a 3 phase program for job training and employment

Our Piece of the Pie - Behind the Walls

- Sentenced males and females aged 16-25 returning to Hartford
- End of Sentence (120 days before EOS)
- CRCI, CCI, CCC, MYI, MWCI, OCI, WCCI, YCI
- In-reach is completed prior to release

Recommendation 2: Vocational and Employment Support

JBCSSD and DOC should submit to JJPOC by March 1, 2025, a list of vocational/employment programming they have and the limitations to connecting youth to opportunities in the community. They should provide an explanation on how they are connecting kids to these opportunities prior to release.

- a. Additionally, DOC and JBCSSD should identify the individual responsible at each facility who is responsible for knowing the children who are in job related activities, their release date, and how many children they released have an employer and a job.
- b. Finally, DOC and JBCSSD should outline a method of operation to address current limitations or inefficiencies in connecting youth to employment/testing/opportunities prior to release and during their time in facility.

- Reentry Intake Assessment Surveys Completed upon intake (accused/sentenced) with Reentry Counselor to assess needs.
- Partnership with Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board and Justice Education Center: Project Re-Entry
 - VR Goggle through Trnsfr Career Exploration- 31 participate in VR learning program.
- MYI Connections an email point of contact, was created to allow for youth who have been discharged, to reach out to MYI staff and either keep MYI staff updated on how they are doing, need work boots and don't have the resources or any other reason to ensure their success back into the community.
- Reentry/Discharge planning includes ID procurement, identifying and addressing areas of need such as housing, mental health, medical, education, vocational, insurance coverage, community based resources. Re-Entry counselor is responsible for identifying and coordinates job-related activities for MYI population.
- Re-Entry Group The population learned about the application process for employment, interview skills as well as mock interviews confidence, and the do/don't of a working environment.
 - Re-Entry services
 - Resume building
 - Life skills
 - Budgeting
 - Tie a tie

Barriers

- Currently not a drivers education testing site
- Do not have our own VR Goggles – One set on loan from Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board
- Returned four sets of VR goggles to Justice Education Center
- Some students struggle with VR learning
- Many of the youth discharge from court

- Unified School District #1

High school students have access to Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs as part of their curriculum. The CTE curricula blends industry-specific theory with hands-on practical training equipping students with valuable skills for gainful employment upon re-entry into the community. Enrollment is continuous and does not require prior coursework. Each semester, students have the opportunity to participate in a vocational course from fields such as Automotive Body Technology, Automotive Technology, Culinary Arts, and Graphic Art and Printing technology. With these opportunities, students may earn their OSHA-10 credential in addition to course Certificates of Achievement and Completion. Additionally, students enrolled in the Culinary Arts program have the opportunity to earn nationally recognized certification in Food Service through the ServSafe program. Sponsored by the National Restaurant Association Education Foundation, the ServSafe program provides the restaurant and food service industry with comprehensive food safety training and certification. After students earn their high school diploma, they have the opportunity to continue coursework in the additional vocational classes which they have not yet taken. Additionally available to students is the Barbering program. Students who complete training in Barbering receive the Affidavit of Hours indicating that they have fulfilled the requisite study in order to take the licensure examination. At this time, the Affidavit of Hours is sent to the Department of Public Health until the student is ready to take the licensure examination.

In the High School Program, USD#1 is actively working to strengthen relationships with local employers in the community. Currently, the district has established a partnership with Forge City Works in Hartford. The Culinary Arts instructor is aware of the students' release dates and, if a student expresses interest, will facilitate a connection with Forge City Works. Additionally, the vocational coordinator is actively pursuing further opportunities to expand community partnerships. The vocational programs are designed in alignment with industry best practices, which is expected to provide long-term benefits for both students and employers.

- .

- Unified School District #1

- One limitation to connecting students to employment is that they are usually still working on their High School Diploma while incarcerated. As in the community, students generally seek career employment following high school graduation. However, USD#1 does provide transition skill education to its students such as resume writing, interview skills, career exploration, etc. USD#1 also provides both OSHA-10 and ServSafe credentials which are valid in the community. OSHA-10 is available for all students in either Auto Technology or Culinary Arts classes. While ServSafe is available for Culinary Arts students. The district is also working on getting the Barbering/Cosmetology licensing exam available within the correctional facility. These are all steps to make the students more immediately marketable post-release.
- Students are assessed utilizing:
 - RIASEC Test (Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising and Conventional)
 - O*NET Interest Profiler (Occupational Information Network)
 - Transitional Interview to assess interests
- School staff provide transition planning, support around identifying school of choice and attaining work permits.
- USD#1 staff collaborates with Juvenile Justice Education Unit to support the youth re-entry into their school of choice.
- MYI currently has 37 enrolled youth and one under 18 graduate.
- Currently working toward a dual enrollment Pell College Program at MYI.

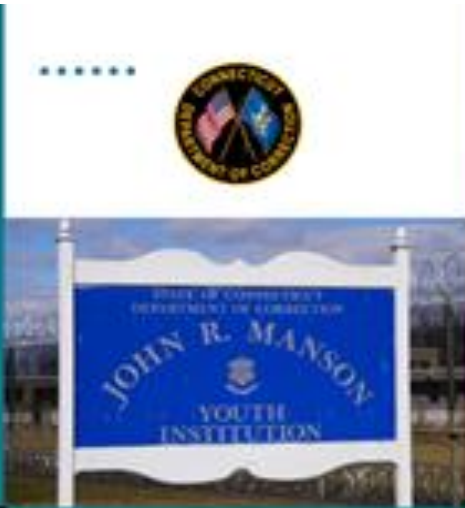
Important Contacts

CT Violence Intervention Program
230 Ashmun St, New Haven, CT 06511
203-553-7282

Family Reentry CRJ
75 Washington Avenue, Bridgeport, CT 06604
203-838-0496

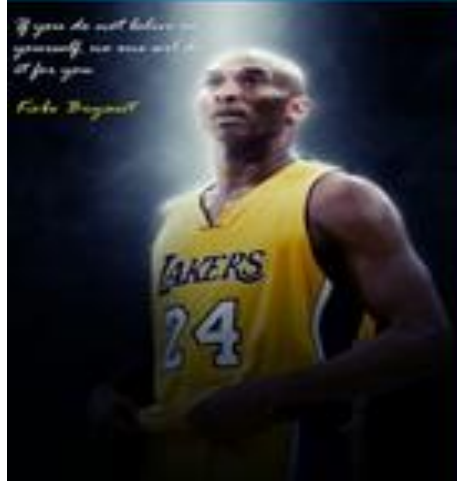
CRT Resource Center
395 Wetherfield Avenue, Hartford, CT 06114
860-560-5881

Congress Youth Collaborative
55 Airport Road (Suite 201), Hartford, CT 06114
860-294-3855



So, you are leaving prison, what's next?

"THE MOMENT YOU GIVE UP, IS THE MOMENT YOU LET SOMEONE ELSE WIN"
Kobe Bryant



Are things going well?
Are you in need of support?

Contact US!

DOC.MYIConnections@ct.gov

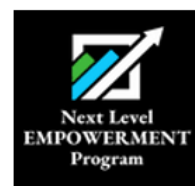
43 Jarvis Street
Cheshire, Connecticut 06410

MANSON YOUTH INSTITUTION RE-ENTRY WORKFORCE ASSESSMENT

Re-Entry Counselor: _____ Date: _____

Entry Date: _____ Reassessment Date: _____

WORKFORCE QUESTIONNAIRE	
Have you ever been employed in the community?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, where?	
What long was your employment?	
Do you think you can benefit from being employed?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, how?
Do you have a workforce permit?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If no, would you like to obtain one? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you wish to work in the community?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, where?
How would you like to improve your work ability?	



- Mens Reentry Support Group
- NLEP Community Transitional Housing Program
- NLEP Warmline (Saturday/Sunday 24hours – Monday-Friday 5pm to 6am)

Warmline: 888-260-1484
Nextlevelemp.org

Founded by Jackie James-Boyd and Ray Boyd

Ray Boyd



Program Manager for New Visions for Public Safety at the Law and Racial Justice Center.
Ray.Boyd@yale.edu
https://law.yale.edu

Re-Entry Services

MYI Re-Entry Counselor Contact Info
203-806-2552
DOC.ORSU@ct.gov
https://portal.ct.gov/doc/org/offender-re-entry-services

What happens if I need:

Job-You can utilize the CT Job Bank
https://www.l.ctdolstate.ct.us/jcb/

Food Assistance-
https://portal.ct.gov/dss/snap/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program--snap

Health and Human Services-
Dial 2-1-1
https://www.211ct.org/

Health Insurance-
800-723-2986
Connecticare.com

Job Seeker Services by Geographical Region in CT



A Workforce Development Board plays a crucial role in supporting formerly incarcerated individuals by providing access to training, education, and employment opportunities. These boards collaborate with local employers, training providers, and community organizations to develop programs tailored to the unique needs of this population, helping them build job skills, gain certifications, and secure meaningful employment. By offering career counseling, job placement services, and supportive resources like resume building and interview preparation, Connecticut's Workforce Development Boards help formerly incarcerated individuals reintegrate into society, reduce recidivism, and achieve long-term economic stability.

Connecticut's 5 Workforce Development Boards by Region

 NWIB 249 Thomaston Ave. Waterbury 203-574-6971 SCAN HERE TO GO TO NWIB'S website	 Workforce Alliance 370 James St. New Haven 203-867-4030 SCAN HERE TO GO TO Workforce Alliance's website
 Capital Workforce Partners 1 Union Place, 3rd Floor Hartford 860-552-1111 SCAN HERE TO GO TO Capital Workforce Partners' website	 WorkPlace 1000 Lafayette Blvd, Suite 501 Bridgeport 203-610-8500 SCAN HERE TO GO TO The WorkPlace's website
 EWSB 108 New Park Ave. North Franklin 860-859-4100 SCAN HERE TO GO TO EWSB's website	<p>Each Workforce Development Board offers different programs and training opportunities tailored to local needs. Availability varies, so research their website or contact your local board to learn more.</p>

Re-entry Ready Checklist for Individuals Preparing for Re-Entry

This checklist is designed to help individuals who are currently incarcerated prepare for re-entry into society by addressing common challenges. Use this checklist to assess areas where you are already well-prepared and identify areas that may need further attention. It is important to note that each person's situation and needs are unique, so this checklist should be used in a way that best suits your circumstances.

IDENTIFICATION AND KEY DOCUMENTS

When I am released, I will have access to:

<input type="checkbox"/> Birth Certificate:	YES NO	<input type="checkbox"/> Social Security Card:	YES NO
<input type="checkbox"/> State ID:	YES NO	<input type="checkbox"/> Expired?:	YES NO
<input type="checkbox"/> Driver's License:	YES NO	<input type="checkbox"/> Status:	VALID SUSPENDED/REVOKED EXPIRED
<input type="checkbox"/> Passport:	YES NO	<input type="checkbox"/> Expired?:	YES NO
<input type="checkbox"/> Library Card:	YES NO		

I'm not sure, I need to find this out.

HOUSING

Previously, my address was _____

In the short term, I will look for _____

Short term housing is with a family member or friend, transitional housing, a shelter or other emergency housing. Your parole/probation will affect your choices, as well as any special needs you may have. (ex. Assisted living, sex offender registry, addiction treatment, women and children, etc.)

In the long term, I'd like to live with or in _____

Long term housing is finding an apartment, moving in with family or friends permanently. It should meet your parole/probation eligibility, personal and financial needs.

My record may affect who I can live with, or where I can live in the following ways: _____

I'm not sure, I need to find this out. I will contact: _____

PUBLIC BENEFITS

Previously, I have received _____ in benefits.

While incarcerated, I can apply for (but won't receive until released):

<input type="checkbox"/> Social Security Retirement	<input type="checkbox"/> Supplemental Security Income	<input type="checkbox"/> Social Security Disability Income
<input type="checkbox"/> Veteran's benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicaid or HUSKY	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicare

I'm not sure, I need to find this out. I will contact: _____

After I am released, in addition to above, I may apply for:

<input type="checkbox"/> SNAP (Food Stamps)	<input type="checkbox"/> Assurance Wireless (Free Phone)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lifeline (phone, internet, bundled service)
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MANSON YOUTH INSTITUTION
RE-ENTRY INTAKE ASSESSMENT

Re-Entry Counselor: _____

Date: _____

Individual Commit Date: _____

Intake Information			
Name:	DOB:	Age:	Gender:
Inmate Number:	Unit:		
Address	City/Town	Zip Code	
Birthplace:			
Mother's Name:		Mother's Maiden Name:	
Father's Name:		Legal Guardian:	

Emergency Contact Information		
Name:	Relationship:	Phone:

Judicial Information			
Charges/ Convictions:			
Are you sentenced?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	Length of Conviction?	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Identification Information	
DOC will cover the cost of a DMV ID. The DOC will not cover the cost of license renewals.	
Have you ever obtained a State Identification Card, Learners Permit, or Driver's License?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, Which State?	
Is this item expired? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/>	
If Yes, do you have that item in your property or stored elsewhere?	
Do you have any other forms of identification?	
Would you like to apply for any of the following: License Renewal <input type="checkbox"/> License Duplicate <input type="checkbox"/>	
Non-Driver ID <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Driver's ID Renewal <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Driver's ID Duplicate <input type="checkbox"/>	

Housing
What were your living arrangements prior to being incarcerated?
Have you had a consistently safe place to live in the last year? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Doubled Up - With another family or other person because of loss of housing or as a result of economic hardship
<input type="checkbox"/> Shelter - Emergency or transitional shelter
<input type="checkbox"/> Halfway House/Sober House - Halfway houses serve as the halfway point between an institution and independent society
<input type="checkbox"/> Hotel/Motel - Living in what is NOT an emergency or transitional shelter and involves payment
<input type="checkbox"/> Other Temporary Living Situation - Trailer park, campground, car, park, public places, abandoned building, street, or any other inadequate living space
<input type="checkbox"/> Permanent Housing - person who is living in a fixed, regular, and adequate housing situation
What will your living arrangements be upon release?
Do you foresee yourself lacking a consistently safe place to live upon release? <u>THIS REQUIRES A 211 REFERRAL</u> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> Which town/City?
Have you had difficulty with safe and stable housing before you came to MYI?
<input type="checkbox"/> Doubled Up - With another family or other person because of loss of housing or as a result of economic hardship
<input type="checkbox"/> Shelter - Emergency or transitional shelter
<input type="checkbox"/> Halfway House/Sober House - Halfway houses serve as the halfway point between an institution and independent society
<input type="checkbox"/> Hotel/Motel - Living in what is NOT an emergency or transitional shelter and involves payment

Birth Certification
You are eligible if you are within 3 years of release. Be advised if you were born out of the country it is challenging for DOC to obtain this item.
Were you born in the United States of America? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a copy of your Birth Certification in your property? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Would you like to submit an application to obtain your Birth Certificate? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Military
ARE YOU A MILITARY VETERAN? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, what branch?
If yes, would you like to order a DD-214? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Visiting /Transportation
Will your family be visiting you? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, who?
How often do you think your family will be visiting you?
Does your immediate family have a form of transportation? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Would your family member(s) benefit from transportation assistance? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Residential Relocation
Do you currently live with your family? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, who?
Do you feel safe at your current residential location? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
If no, why?
Would you like assistance with relocating?
Would your family benefit from residential relocation? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, where?

Additional Re-Entry Services
Do you require a Reentry Guide? If so, what town/city?
If sentenced, do have parole/probation to follow? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> Name of your PO
Length of Time?
*If you have parole or probation upon release, your PO will also assist you with your reentry needs
Are you involved with DCF? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> Name of caseworker:
Did you have insurance prior to incarceration? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Do you feel you would benefit from substance treatment services in the community? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Do you feel you would benefit from mental health support in the community? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Are you a father and would like information on fatherhood programming? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Are you interested in higher education? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Are you interested in job readiness programs? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Would you like to create a resume? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Is this your first incarceration? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> If no, how many times in the past?
Have you ever been retained in at any of the following programs? (Circle all that apply)
Juvenile Detention Community / Residential Programs CJTS

QUESTIONNAIRE			
What is your passion?			
Do you have a work history? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If yes, Where have you worked?			
Do you have a job offer or prospects for a job? Contact information?			
List any programs attended/completed and/or certifications?			
What is your ideal job?			
If you can't work at your idea job, what type of employment will you seek?			
What will support system look like upon release? (Ex. Family Members, Mentors, Religious Advisors, Clinicians, Friends, etc.)			
Name:	Relationship	Phone Number	Town/City
List (3) goals you want to reach prior to your release?			
1.			
2.			
3.			



Re-Entry Supports: Availability & Need

Presentation to the JJPOC

March 20, 2025

Catherine Foley Geib, Director, Juv. Residential Svcs
Judicial Branch, Court Support Services Division



Agenda

- Transition Supports
- Vocational & Employment Support
- Strategies and Opportunities
- Recommended Investments

Transition Supports

Transition Supports: How Many Youth Served?

- **245 youth served in calendar year 2024**

- 39 youth who previously discharged were still involved with their Reintegration Mentor in the community.
- 206 youth discharged from one of the nine (9) juvenile residential treatment programs.
 - 189 youth (91.7%) discharged on community supervision.
 - 17 youth (8.3%) discharged at end of sentence.
- 46% from REGIONS, program with the longest stay (over 6 – 12 months).
- 37% from Community Diversion and Respite Center (CDRC), program with the shortest stay (30-120 days).

Transition Supports: How Much and What?

1

140 families (57%) received transportation to the program for visitation.

2

179 families (73%) received reintegration support at discharge.

3

22 families (9%) received relocation support for safety reasons.

Transition Supports: Not Available

- **58 youth and their families (24%) did not receive needed assistance or were only partially served.**
 - 38 youth (66%) were treated at the REGIONS programs in the Bridgeport and Hartford Juvenile Residential Centers which do not have access to Reintegration Mentor and Family Support Specialist services.
 - 13 youth (22%) did not complete the program due to elopement, needing a higher level of care, or were returned to detention due to multiple program violations.
- 7 youth and their families (12%) were only partially served because of a lack of funding to provide certain vocational programs, rental assistance, or past-due utility bills.

Transition Supports: Families Need Assistance to Visit Their Child

- **63 of 68 families currently with a child at a juvenile residential treatment program participated in an interview to discuss their needs.**
 - 40 families (63%) reported needing transportation assistance to visit their child.
 - 37 families (59%) would utilize an Uber/Lyft-type gift card to visit their child twice a month.
 - 15 families (24%) would utilize a bus pass or gas card to visit their child twice per month.

Transition Supports: Families Need Assistance with Basic Needs

- 50 families (79%) reported needing assistance with the following when their returns home:
 - 26 families (51%) need groceries/food.
 - 16 families (32%) need assistance to pay past-due utility bills.
 - 23 families (46%) need transportation to outpatient services for themselves or their child.
 - 21 families (41%) need transportation to employment for themselves or their child.

Transition Supports: Families Need Assistance with Basic Needs continued

- 20 families (40%) need assistance to purchase a bed and/or dresser for their child.
- 29 families (57%) need assistance to purchase clothes for their child.
- 19 families (37%) need rental assistance.
- 25 families (49%) need vocational training support.
- 10 families (19%) need assistance to relocate for safety reasons.

Transition Supports: Barriers, Considerations, Opportunities

- Variety of Challenges and Multiple Day-to-Day Stressors
 - Poverty/low income, disenfranchised and chaotic neighborhood, struggling schools, limited time (working, childcare, other family obligations)
- Case Managers, Juvenile Probation Officers, and Reintegration Mentors work hard to access local resources for assistance (food, clothes, information, entitlements).
- The Connecticut Justice-involved Medicaid Waiver Plan may address these needs if approved and funded.

Transition Supports: 5 Strategies to Address Unmet Needs

Interviews with 63 families and the review of 206 program discharges show that a significant number of youth transition to the community with unmet needs annually.

1. Reintegration mentor and family support specialist services at Bridgeport and Hartford REGIONS hardware-secure programs for 40 youth.

2. Transportation funds for family visitation for 100 youth.

3. Uber-type transportation for 50 youth to/from appointments/work.

4. Flex funds for basic needs (food, clothing, bed/dresser, rent/utilities) for 110 youth.

5. Rental assistance (first and last month rent) for 10 families to relocate for safety.

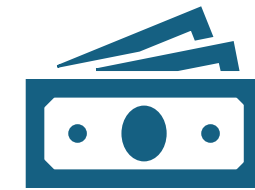
Vocational and Employment Support

Vocational and Employment Support: Programming & Youth Accomplishments

- Each youth has someone (program manager, case manager, clinician, reintegration mentor, juvenile probation officer) responsible to know if they are in job-related activities, their discharge date, and if employed or connected to a vocational program.
- 21 different certifications, training courses, and licensure programs available: CPR/AED/First Aid, ServSafe, Phlebotomy, Nurse Aide (CNA), CT Security Guard, Medical Assistant (CMA), Commercial Truck Driver's Licensure (CDL), Nail Technician, CNC operator, Forklift Operator, Eyelash Technician, and more.
- **Between September 2023 – December 2024, youth earned 209 certificates, 24 youth completed a training program, and 13 youth were employed or had an internship in the community at discharge.**

Vocational and Employment Support: Variety of Limitations Restrict Access

1. Eligibility
 - a. Age
 - b. Education
 - c. Behavior
 - d. Program Location



2. Funding



3. Space



4. Time



5. Security



6. Support

Vocational & Employment Supports: Opportunities to Expand Access

1. Provide Reintegration Mentor services for youth treated at the Bridgeport and Hartford hardware-secure REGIONS programs to connect them to community prior to discharge.
2. Offer additional opportunities to earn industry-recognized credentials (IRCs).
3. Implement exploratory career programming using augmented virtual reality technology to allow youth under 16 years of age, and those youth over age 16 and under credit, to begin career planning.
4. Expand in-program internships to develop soft skills, work ethic, experience, and resume.
5. Continue to collaborate with the juvenile residential education providers and the Department of Children and Families Juvenile Justice Education Unit (DCF JJEU) to access vocational opportunities paid by the student's board of education.

Vocational & Employment Supports: Opportunities to Expand Access continued

6. Participate in the Justice Education Center (JEC) Career Pathways Program to provide exploratory and pre-exploratory programs in automotive, carpentry, manufacturing technology, and other fields.
7. Develop a supported employment system that provides stipends to youth to work in community-based internships and jobs, summer employment, etc.
8. Build effective pathways to employment with the DOL and the Workforce Development Boards (WDBs).
9. Develop or connect with opportunities available through CT State, the 119k Commission, the business community, skilled trade groups, the military, and other entities as applicable.

Vocational & Employment Support: 5 Strategies to Meet the Need

Based on experiences, challenges, the ongoing review of the best practices, and the data from the September 2023 – December 2024, several strategies are highlighted.

1. In-program internships for 100 youth annually.

2. Tuition for 210 youth to earn IRCs.

3. Career exploration augmented virtual reality technology for three (3) hardware-secure REGIONS programs (Bridgeport, Hartford, Journey House).

4. Reintegration Mentor and Family Support Specialist Services at Bridgeport and Hartford REGIONS hardware-secure programs for 40 youth.

5. Staff to build relationships with DOL, WDBs, JJEU, CETCS.

Needed Annual Investment

Transition Supports: Investmen t

Total Needed Annual Investment	\$1,675,000
Reintegration Mentor & Family Support Specialist Services at Bridgeport and Hartford REGIONS hardware-secure programs for 40 youth	\$1,200,00
Transportation funds for family visitation for 100 youth	\$150,000
Uber-type transportation for 50 youth to/from appointments/work	\$25,000
Flex Funds for basic needs (food, clothing, bed/dresser, rent/utilities)) for 110 youth	\$220,000
Rental assistance (first and last month rent) for 10 families to relocate due to safety concerns	\$80,000

Vocational & Employment Support: Investment

	\$936,00
Total Needed Annual Investment	0
	\$256,00
In-program internships for 100 youth	0
Tuition for 210 youth to earn industry recognized credentials	\$500,00
	0
Career exploration augmented virtual reality technology for 3 hardware-secure REGIONS programs (Bridgeport, Hartford, Journey House)	\$180,00
	0
Reintegration Mentor and Family Support Specialist Services at Bridgeport and Hartford REGIONS hardware-secure programs for 40 youth	Cost noted in other section
Staff to build relationships with DOL,	2 staff

Questions?

Next Meeting – April 17, 2025



**RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR
INFORMATION RELATED TO
RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
INCARCERATION WORKGROUP
RE-ENTRY SUBGROUP ADOPTED BY
THE JUVENILE JUSTICE POLICY AND
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON
JANUARY 16, 2025**

**CONNECTICUT JUDICIAL BRANCH
March 17, 2025**

Table of Contents

Introduction.....2

ExecutiveSummary..... 2

Recommendation #1: Transition Supports..... 4

Recommendation #2: Vocational and Employment Support.....8

Appendices:

 A: Estimated Costs to Address Unmet Needs.....15

 B: JBCSSD Juvenile Residential Treatment Continuum.....16

 C: Family Interview Questions.....17

 D: Available Vocational Programming.....18

 E. Staff Responsible for Discharge Planning by Program..... 23

Introduction

The Re-Entry Subgroup of the Incarceration Workgroup submitted a comprehensive re-entry plan and fiscal note to the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (JJPOC) on December 1, 2024, in response to Public Act 24-139, subsection 2. The re-entry subgroup submitted ten recommendations with a cost estimate of \$28.9 million to fully serve approximately 495 juveniles who return to the community annually from facilities operated or contracted by the Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division (JBCSSD) and the Department of Correction (DOC). The comprehensive fiscal note outlines what services and investments are needed to safely and effectively guide the juveniles who present the highest risk to public safety and the opportunities and supports they need to become successful adults.

The JJPOC prioritized and adopted three (3) modified recommendations on January 16, 2025. The following report provides answers to questions posed about the transition supports and vocational and employment support needed by the youth. The target population of this report is approximately 220 youth¹ under the age of 18 who re-enter the community from a JBCSSD² operated or contracted residential treatment program on an annual basis.

Executive Summary

These recommendations provide a refined assessment of need outlined in the Re-Entry Success Plan. Overwhelmingly, families reported their greatest barriers to success for their children are poverty and the lack of readily available access to opportunities (education, training, employment, treatment). Strategic investments outlined in this report include addressing basic needs and providing vocational and employment opportunities with support from a close and trusted adult who can walk by the youth's side to keep them on the path to success. Someone, like a reintegration mentor, who is available each day for a year upon re-entry to provide the necessary guidance and support.

¹ This report does not address the needs of approximately 600 juveniles admitted to pretrial detention annually. The pretrial population has a very limited stay in detention with over 50% of juveniles being released within 1-3 days. The average length of stay for the entire pretrial population is 18 days for FY24. Some pretrial youth will enter a juvenile residential treatment program. The other youth discharged from pretrial detention may access JBCSSD and other community-based services through referrals made by their Juvenile Probation Officer.

² The DOC is submitting answers to the questions posed in a separate response.

The juvenile residential treatment programs operated and contracted by the JBCSSD served 245 juveniles in calendar year 2024. This group of clients includes 206 youth who discharged from a residential treatment program during the year and an additional 39 youth served by reintegration mentors in the community. The data for this population shows that many youth and their families already benefit from the recommended transition supports:

- 140 families (57%) utilized transportation support to visit their child,
- 179 youth (73%) utilized assistance to meet basic needs,
- 22 families (9%) utilized relocation support for safety reasons but,
- 58 youth (24%) only had some of their needs met.

Of the 58 youth who only had some of their needs met:

- 38 of the youth discharged from the state-operated, hardware secure REGIONS programs at the Bridgeport and Hartford Juvenile Residential Centers. Youth in these programs do not have access to Reintegration Mentor³ and Family Support Specialist⁴ services.⁵
- 13 youth did not discharge to the community either because they absconded, needed a higher level of care, or returned to detention due to unsafe and egregious behaviors.
- 7 youth were not fully served due to a lack of funding. They and their families would have benefited from specific vocational programs, rental assistance, or assistance paying past-due utility bills.

Interviews with 63 of the families with youth currently served at the juvenile residential treatment programs indicate, however, that a significant number need more support to meet basic needs and access risk-reducing and transformative opportunities. An annual investment of \$2.611 million for approximately 220 youth will provide the additionally needed support and opportunities (see Appendix A).

³ Reintegration Mentors are employees of the contracted REGIONS providers. They support the very highest risk juveniles while they are in residential treatment and for 12 months in the community once they return home.

⁴ Family Support Specialists are also employees of the contracted REGIONS providers. They support the caregiver(s) to engage in treatment, identify and address basic needs, and teach the caregiver(s) new skills while the youth is in residential treatment. They continue to work with the caregiver(s) for the first 90 days after the youth has returned home.

⁵ JBCSSD initiated a request for proposals to provide these services at the state-operated, hardware-secure REGIONS programs at Bridgeport and Hartford, however, due to a lack the funding a contract award could not be made. It is important to note that all youth at the contracted, hardware-secure and staff-secure REGIONS programs do receive reintegration mentor and family support specialist services.

The JBCSSD faces a \$26.5 million deficit going into fiscal year 2026-2027 and cannot reallocate funds to invest in additional services. While Connecticut has submitted its application for the justice-involved Medicaid waiver to support re-entry and health-related and social needs, there is great concern that the anticipated funding will not be authorized. Similarly, the ability to seek federal grant opportunities from OJJDP, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Education seems unlikely in the current climate. Given these concerns, the JBCSSD, in conjunction with its contracted providers, will seek grant opportunities through private foundations and other sources to increase our ability to provide the multiple supports (e.g., transportation, basic needs) needed by the youth and their families.

The JBCSSD also will continue its collaboration with the other state agencies participating in the JJPOC, and more as needed, to tap into existing resources as much as possible and to develop more efficient and effective pathways to supports and opportunities. Specific to the needs discussed in this report, JBCSSD program development and monitoring staff will continue to work with the Department of Labor to build pathways to access the resources of the Workforce Development Boards, with the Department of Social Services to connect families to entitlements, and with the Department of Housing for housing assistance.

Recommendation 1: Transition Supports

JBCSSD should submit to the JJPOC how much of the items listed below are happening, how many youth are utilizing the supports, what number of youth and families need the below services, and what is the difference between the demand for the below items. Additionally, they should ask families their need for the below items and submit an officially recorded anecdote on the utilization and need, to demonstrate barriers, considerations, and opportunities. JBCSSD may also identify, or offer suggestions of their own, for potential reallocations to support the items below. They should identify how many youth leave their facilities on supervision and end of sentence, and any appropriate or necessary partnership to deliver the provision of services below.

- a. When a youth is admitted to a facility or contracted program, necessary transportation assistance to the youth's identified family to visit the young person at the facility or contracted program at least twice a month.*
- b. The need for flex funds to support families in need for up to 6 months following a youth's return home. Support may include but is not limited to housing assistance, basic needs, transportation, and vocational training.*

- c. *The need for flex funds to [give] youth and their family the ability to relocate if needed for safety reasons. Funds may cover moving, basic needs, and initial housing payments.*

The JBCSSD collaborated with its network of nine (9) residential treatment programs (see Appendix B) to gather the following information for calendar year 2024:

- 245 youth were served, which includes 206 youth discharged from the residential treatment programs and an additional 39 youth who previously discharged and were still involved with their reintegration mentor in the community.
 - 140 families (57%) received transportation to the program for visitation.
 - 179 youth (73%) received reintegration mentor support in the program and at discharge.
 - 22 families (9%) received relocation support for safety reasons.
 - 58 youth and their families (24%) did not receive the assistance they requested or were only partially served.

Of the 58 youth and their families (24%) who did not receive the assistance they requested or were only partially served:

- 38 youth (66%) were treated at the REGIONS programs in the Bridgeport and Hartford Juvenile Residential Centers, which do not have access to Reintegration Mentor and Family Support Specialist services⁶.
- 13 youth (22%) did not complete the residential treatment program due to elopement, needing a higher level of care, or were returned to detention due to multiple program violations.
- 7 youth and their families (12%) were only partially served because of a lack of funding to provide certain vocational programs, rental assistance, or to pay past-due utility bills.

Family Interviews

The juvenile residential treatment program providers conducted interviews with families in January and February 2025. The program providers contacted the families of the 68 youth served at the nine (9) programs (see Appendix B) at the time. The overwhelming majority of

⁶ The JBCSSD attempted to contract for reintegration mentor and family support specialist services for the state-operated, hardware-secure REGIONS programs at Bridgeport and Hartford but lacks the funding needed to award the service contract.

families were eager to communicate their needs as 63 families participated, a response rate of 93%. The families reported needing assistance with the following:

- 40 families (63%) need transportation assistance to visit their child.
- 37 families (59%) would utilize an Uber/Lyft-type gift card to visit twice a month.
- 15 families (24%) would utilize a bus pass or gas card to visit twice a month.
- 50 families (79%) need assistance with the following when their child returns home:
 - 26 families (51%): groceries/food.
 - 16 families (32%): past-due utility bills.
 - 23 families (46%): transportation to outpatient treatment.
 - 21 families (41%): transportation to work.
 - 20 families (40%): bed and/or dresser for their child.
 - 29 families (57%): clothes for their child.
 - 19 families (37%): rent.
 - 25 families (49%): vocational training.
 - 10 families (19%): relocation for safety reasons.

These findings demonstrate that families served by the JBCSSD juvenile residential treatment programs have tremendous needs for assistance for their child to successfully return home.

Barriers, Considerations, and Opportunities

Families with children treated at the juvenile residential treatment programs typically face a variety of challenges and multiple stressors in their day to day lives, including but not limited to poverty or low income, a chaotic and disenfranchised neighborhood with struggling schools, limited time and availability due to working multiple jobs and other family obligations, such as caring for other children or family. While the contracted juvenile residential treatment program providers work incredibly hard to tap into local resources to meet the various needs of families (e.g., social service/human service agency, church, food bank, one-stop career center, housing authority), it is very often not enough. The intent of the justice-involved Medicaid waiver is to fund the very types of services that the families need to make their child's transition home and back to the community successful. However, consideration must be given to the fact that it is very unclear if the plan the state of Connecticut submitted to the federal Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services will be approved and funded.

Youth Discharges

Of the 206 youth re-entering to the community in calendar 2024, 17 youth (8.3%) were discharged at the end of their sentence and 189 youth (91.7%) were discharged on community supervision. The data is provided by program and discharge type below.

CDRC	End of Sentence # Discharges	%	On Supervision # Discharges	%	Total #Discharges
2024	2	3%	74	97%	76

AFIR	End of Sentence # Discharges	%	On Supervision # Discharges	%	Total #Discharges
2024	0	0%	13	100%	13

AMIR	End of Sentence # Discharges	%	On Supervision # Discharges	%	Total #Discharges
2024	1	5%	21	95%	22

REGIONS	End of Sentence # Discharges	%	On Supervision # Discharges	%	Total #Discharges
2024	14	15%	81	85%	95

Transition Supports: Strategies to Address Unmet Needs

A review of the 63 family interviews and the 206 program discharges indicates that a significant number of youth are returning to the community with unmet needs on an annual basis. Strategies to meet these needs include but are not limited to providing the following (see Appendix A):

1. Reintegration Mentor and Family Support Specialist services at the Bridgeport and Hartford REGIONS state-operated, hardware-secure programs for approximately 40 of the very highest risk youth. The youth treated at these two (2) programs tend to be the most behaviorally challenged, have the highest risk to recidivate, and require the most services, support, and supervision.
2. Transportation to support visitation for approximately 100 youth a year.
3. Uber/Lyft-type gift cards for approximately 50 youth a year to get to and from appointments, training programs, and work or internships in the community.
4. Flex funds to meet basic needs (food, clothing, bed/dresser, housing assistance) for approximately 110 youth a year.
5. Flex funds to relocate (moving expenses, basic needs, initial housing payments) approximately 10 families a year to protect their child from gang-related, life-threatening danger.

Recommendation 2: Vocational and Employment Support

JBCSSD should submit to the JJPOC a list of vocational/employment programming they have and the limitations to connecting youth to opportunities in the community. They should provide an explanation on how they are connecting youth, and how many, to these opportunities prior to release.

- a. Additionally, JBCSSD should identify the individual at each facility who is responsible for knowing the youth who are in job related activities, their release date, and how many youth released have an employer and/or connected to a vocational program.*
- b. Finally, JBCSSD should outline strategies and opportunities to address current limitations or inefficiencies in connecting youth to employment, testing, and opportunities prior to release and during their time in the facility.*

List of Vocational/Employment Programming

Appendix D provides a list of all the vocational programming available for youth at the JBCSSD juvenile treatment residential programs. There are 21 different certifications, training courses, and licensure programs available. The list includes certifications or licensure in CPR/AED/First Aid, ServSafe, Phlebotomy, Nurse Aide (CNA), CT Security Guard, Medical Assistant (CMA), Commercial Truck Driver's Licensure (CDL), Nail Technician, Pharmacy Technician, Dental Assistant, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT),

Esthetician, CNC operator, Forklift Operator, Veterinary Assistant, Eyelash Technician, and Real Estate. Please note that some locations can provide all these opportunities, while other locations cannot due to space and other limitations.

Limitations

While there are 21 different vocational options, many youth cannot access these opportunities for a variety of reasons.

1. Eligibility

- a. Age: Many of the youth do not meet minimum requirements for vocational training, certification, or entry-level employment due to their age.
 - i. Many of the youth are under age 16 and so have few employment options (e.g., farm work, grocery store bagging).
 - ii. Several industry-related credentials (IRCs) have an age requirement of 18 years old (ex., security guard certification, Certified Nurse's Assistant (CNA), Commercial Driver's License (CDL)).
- b. Education: Several industry-related credentials (IRCs) require a high school diploma or GED. Many of the youth are over age and under credit and will not graduate high school before they discharge from the juvenile residential treatment program.
- c. Behavior: Some youth are not ready to engage in an internship or job in the community. They are making progress towards their treatment goals but need more time to work on developing prosocial skills and effectively managing their emotions and impulses.
- d. Program Location: The juvenile residential treatment programs vary by the risk of the population (Tier I – Tier V), treatment focus (e.g., substance use, family discord, antisocial thinking, violence), length of stay, and vocational opportunities offered. While every program offers some vocational opportunities, the most vocational opportunities are offered at the contracted programs treating the youth with the highest risk and the longest length of stay (REGIONS).

2. Funding

- a. While Appendix D shows the variety of vocational programming available, it also shows that only \$20,000 is allocated to fund these opportunities. Given the very limited funding, access has been curtailed in two ways:
 - i. Only youth in the REGIONS programs have access given that they are the youth at the highest risk to recidivate.

- ii. Classes offered are those with the lowest per client cost to ensure as many youth as possible discharge from REGIONS with at least one certificate.

3. *Space*

- a. Due to physical plant limitations, some juvenile residential treatment programs do not have the space for hands-on workshops and vocational equipment. These programs compensate for the lack of space by offering more certifications that can be done in a classroom setting.

4. *Time*

- a. Particularly for the youth over age and under credit, their time at the residential treatment program is focused on credit recovery to get them graduated from high school or closer to earning their diploma. Since the vocational programming is not funded by the student's school district, they do not receive credit for earning a certificate or completing a training program, which creates an inefficient system and missed opportunities.

5. *Security*

- a. Given that some of the juvenile residential treatment programs are locked settings, the youth needs to make a significant amount of progress towards their treatment goals to be ready to engage in community activities. Once the youth is ready, a reintegration mentor helps them find the training program, internship, or job and provides transportation and supervision for the youth.

6. *Support*

- a. All youth need hands-on support in the community and some do not have access to reintegration mentor services.

Connecting Youth

The contracted REGIONS programs (see Appendix B) employ a reintegration mentor to work with a youth from the first day they are admitted to the program and for 12 months once they return to the community. The reintegration mentor develops a strong, trusting relationship with the youth. They work hard to support the youth to acquire all the needed documentation (birth certificate, social security card, resume, application) for employment or enrollment in a training program. The reintegration mentor teaches life skills, validates feelings, and coaches the youth to cope with stress, frustration, anger, and hopelessness. The reintegration mentor supports the youth in developing effective interpersonal relationships and assists with transportation. The youth works with the reintegration mentor to complete interest inventories and assessments to identify meaningful career pathways. A youth can then complete a certificate or training program which aligns with their interest.

Once the youth has progressed in treatment to a certain level, they will go off-grounds with the reintegration mentor to search for employment, attend job interviews, go to work, or attend a vocational or job training program. The reintegration mentor will stay on-site with the youth to help engage them, to support their success, and to be on hand as needed. The youth treated at the state-operated, hardware-secure REGIONS programs at Bridgeport and Hartford desperately need this same kind of support.

The other contracted juvenile residential treatment programs (CDRC, AFIR, AMIR - see Appendix B and E) are connected to opportunities in the community by the case manager or clinician and the juvenile probation officer. The youth served at CDRC, AFIR, and AMIR are typically lower risk than the youth served at the REGIONS programs. The vocational options at these locations are therefore less robust due to a shorter length of stay, a lower risk to recidivate, and limited funding.

The JBCSSD data collection system began tracking vocational training and employment data for the REGIONS programs in mid-September 2023. For the period from mid-September 2023 through December 2024, the youth earned many certificates and completed several training programs. The number of certificates earned, training programs completed, and employment or internships at discharge is provided below.

Types of Certifications Earned

Certificates Earned* (can earn more than 1)	# Certificates
ATSSA Flagger Certification	13
Babysitting Certification	28
CPR/AED	52
First Aid	43
ServSafe Food Handler	20
Food Safety Handler Certification	13
Guard Card Certification	11
OSHA 10	2
Other: 2 Career Exploration, 1 Security Guard	3
ServSafe	24
Total*	209

Types of Training Programs Completed

Training Programs Completed	# Training Programs
Construction (S/P2)	4
Culinary (S/P2)	19
Kitchen 101	2
Machining (S/P2)	1
Hair Braiding	5
Professional Skills (S/P2)	3
Total	34

Youth Employed or with an Internship at Discharge

Employed/Internship at Discharge*	# Discharges
No	73
Yes	13
Neither entered	2
Total	88

*Only one option can be selected for a youth.

Types of Employment/Internships at Discharge

Employment Industry	Full Time	Part Time	Type of Position
Business Management & Admin.	1	-	Hotel Front Desk Clerk
Education & Training	1	2	Childcare Center Assistant, Childcare Staff, Babysitter
Hospitality & Tourism	2	-	Cook, Restaurant Server
Human Services	-	2	Receptionist
Law, Public Safety, & Security	-	1	Security Guard
Marketing, Sales, & Service	-	3	Car Wash Cashier, Retail Sales Associate, Landscaper
Finance	1	-	Ticket/Box Office Sales
Total	5	8	13

Responsible Staff

Appendix E outlines the person in each program responsible for (1) knowing who the youth are that are in job related activities, (2) their release date, and (3) which youth are employed or connected to a vocational program. To summarize, the manager of each juvenile residential treatment program is responsible for knowing which youth are in job related activities, their release date, and if employed or connected to a vocational program. Depending on the program, the case manager, classification & program officer, reintegration mentor, or clinician is responsible for coordinating the youth's job-related activities and their employment or connection to a vocational program. The clinician at each program is responsible for knowing each youth's release date and working with staff and treatment partners (family, juvenile probation officer, DCF JJEU, school, community providers) to develop and ensure each of the components of the youth's discharge plan is in place prior to the youth's return to the community.

Strategies and Opportunities to Address Current Limitations

Based on the experiences and challenges of the last seven (7) years, and the ongoing review of best practices, several strategies and opportunities to support youth career exploration and connect youth to vocational training, internships, and employment are offered below.

1. Provide reintegration mentor services to youth treated at the Bridgeport and Hartford state-operated, hardware-secure REGIONS programs to connect them to opportunities in the community prior to discharge.
2. Offer additional opportunities to earn industry-recognized credentials (IRCs).
3. Implement exploratory career programming using augmented virtual reality technology for youth under 16 years of age and youth over age and under credit.
4. Expand in-program internships to develop soft skills, work ethic, experience, and to build a resume.
5. Continue to collaborate with the juvenile residential education providers and the Department of Children and Families Juvenile Justice Education Unit (DCF JJEU) to develop access to vocational opportunities through the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS).
6. Coordinate with the Justice Education Center (JEC) Career Pathways Program to provide exploratory and pre-exploratory programs in automotive, carpentry, manufacturing technology, and other fields.
7. Develop a supported employment system that provides stipends to youth to work in community-based internships and jobs, summer employment, etc.

8. Build effective pathways to employment with the DOL, the Workforce Development Boards, and the American Job Centers.
9. Develop or connect with opportunities that may be available through CT State, the Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA), the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM), skilled trade groups, the military, and other entities.

Appendix A
Estimated Costs to Address Unmet Needs

Transition Supports

Reintegration Mentor and Family Support Specialist Services at Bridgeport and Hartford REGIONS hardware-secure programs for 40 youth	\$1,200,000
Transportation funds for family visitation for 100 youth	\$150,000
Uber-type transportation for 50 youth to/from appointments/work	\$25,000
Flex Funds for basic needs (food, clothing, bed/dresser, rent/utilities) for 110 youth	\$220,000
Rental assistance (first and last month rent) for 10 families to relocate due to safety concerns	\$80,000
<i>Cost of Transition Supports</i>	<i>\$1,675,000</i>

Vocational and Employment Supports

In-program internships for 100 youth annually	\$256,000
Tuition for 210 youth annually to earn industry recognized credentials	\$500,000
Career exploration augmented virtual reality technology for three (3) hardware-secure REGIONS programs (Bridgeport, Hartford, Journey House)	\$180,000
Reintegration Mentor and Family Support Specialist Services at Bridgeport and Hartford REGIONS hardware-secure programs for 40 youth	Cost provided above
Staff to build relationships with DOL, WDBs, CTECS	2 staff are assigned
<i>Cost of Vocational and Employment Supports</i>	<i>\$936,000</i>

Total Cost

\$2,611,000

Appendix B
JBCSSD Juvenile Residential Treatment Continuum

Program	# Beds	Provider	Security Level	Population Served	Length of Stay⁷
Community Diversion and Respite Center (CDRC)	16	CJR	Staff Secure	Boys	30-120 days
Adolescent Female Intermediate Residential (AFIR)	6	Community Solutions Inc. (CSI)	Staff Secure	Girls	4-6 months
Adolescent Male Intermediate Residential (AMIR)	8	CJR	Staff Secure	Boys	4-6 months
REGIONS - Waterbury	8	CJR	Staff Secure	Boys	6+ months
REGIONS - Hartford	8	Community Partners in Action (CPA)	Staff Secure	Boys	6+ months
REGIONS - Mansfield	12	Journey House at Natchaug Hospital – Hartford Healthcare	Hardware Secure & Limited Secure	Girls	6+ months
REGIONS - Hamden	10/6	Community Partners in Action (CPA)	Hardware Secure & Limited Secure	Boys	6+ months
REGIONS - Bridgeport	12	Judicial Branch, CSSD	Hardware Secure	Boys	6+ months
REGIONS - Hartford	12	Judicial Branch, CSSD	Hardware Secure	Boys & Girls	6+ months

⁷ The exact length of stay is determined by the attainment of treatment goals. Some youth will stay in a REGIONS Staff Secure for less than the length of stay if they are stepping down from a secure REGIONS program.

Appendix C Family Interview Questions

1. Do you or your other family members need transportation assistance to see your child at the program?
 - a. If given financial assistance, would you visit your child at least twice a month?
 - b. If so,
 - i. Would you use an Uber-type gift card?
 - ii. Would other family members (ex. youth's father, siblings, grandparents) use an Uber-type gift card?
 - iii. Would a gas card be a better option? A bus pass?

2. Do you need support when your child returns home?
 - a. If so,
 - i. Do you need support with meeting basic needs?
 1. Groceries? If so, how much? And for how long?
 2. Past due utilities? If so, how much?
 3. Transportation for you or your child to get to outpatient treatment services? And for how long?
 4. Transportation for you or your child to work? And for how long?
 5. Purchase a bed for your child?
 6. Purchase a dresser for your child?
 7. Purchase clothes for your child?
 - ii. Do you need rental assistance? If so, how much? And for how long?
 - iii. Do you or your child need vocational training support? If so, for what types of programs?

3. Do you need financial support to help you and your family relocate for safety reasons?
 - a. If so,
 - i. Do you need support with first and last month's rent? If so, how much?
 - ii. Do you need support to help with moving costs? If so, how much?
 - iii. Do you need basic needs support to help relocate? If so, how much?

Appendix D
Juvenile Residential Services Vocational Training Providers & Programs

Approved Vendors	Types of Training	Tuition Price/ Hourly Rate	Allocation for FY 24-25	Students served in FY 24-25
3	21	Tuition ranges \$115 to \$8,840 depending on course and number students	\$20,000	77
Fresh Start Technical School	CPR/BLS/First Aid	\$135 per pupil	\$4,725	35
	ServSafe® Food Handlers Certification	\$135 per pupil	\$2,160	16
	Phlebotomy Certification	\$1,900 per pupil	\$0	0
	CT Security Guard Certification	\$115 per pupil	\$575	5
	Certified Nurse Aide [CNA]*	\$1,900 per pupil	\$0	0
Belle Academy of Cosmetology	Eyelash Technology Program***	\$3,700 per pupil	\$3,700	1

ACES	<p><i>All Instruction is \$85 per hour with total hours listed below and specific to the course. Individual pupil cost depends on number of students enrolled in each class. Total course cost remains the same for one (1) student or the maximum number of students allowed, unless otherwise noted*.</i></p>		\$8,840 per course	
	Certified Nurse Aide [CNA]*	<p>8 weeks 10 hours per week (meet multiple times a week) plus 24 prep time: Total course \$8,840 (tuition divided by number of students enrolled) MAX-6</p>	\$0	0
	Certified Medical Assistant*	<p>8 weeks 10 hours per week (meet multiple times a week) plus 24 prep time: Total course \$8,840 (tuition divided by number of students enrolled) MAX-6</p>	\$0	0
	CDL, Commercial Truck Driver's Licensure**	<p>8 weeks 10 hours per week (meet multiple times a week) plus 24 prep time: Total course \$8,840 (tuition divided by number of students enrolled) or \$1,700 per student</p>	\$0	0
	Certified Nail Technician*	<p>8 weeks 10 hours per week (meet multiple times a week) plus 24 prep time: Total course \$8,840 (tuition divided by number of students enrolled)</p>	\$0	0

	CPR/AED	8 weeks 10 hours per week (meet multiple times a week) plus 24 prep time: Total course \$8,840 (tuition divided by number of students enrolled) MAX-6	\$0	0
	Pharmacy Technician	8 weeks 10 hours per week (meet multiple times a week) plus 24 prep time: Total course \$8,840 (tuition divided by number of students enrolled) MAX-6	\$0	0
	Dental Assistant*	8 weeks 10 hours per week (meet multiple times a week) plus 24 prep time: Total course \$8,840 (tuition divided by number of students enrolled) MAX-6	\$0	0
	Phlebotomy Certification*	8 weeks 10 hours per week (meet multiple times a week) plus 24 prep time: Total course \$8,840 (tuition divided by number of students enrolled) MAX-6	\$0	0
	EMT – Emergency Medical Technician*	8 weeks 10 hours per week (meet multiple times a week) plus 24 prep time: Total course \$8,840 (tuition divided by number of students enrolled) MAX-6	\$0	0

	Real Estate Licensure Course	8 weeks 10 hours per week (meet multiple times a week) plus 24 prep time: Total course \$8,840 (tuition divided by number of students enrolled)	\$0	0
	CT Security Guard Certification	8 weeks 10 hours per week (meet multiple times a week) plus 24 prep time: Total course \$8,840 (tuition divided by number of students enrolled)	\$0	0
	Esthetician***	8 weeks 10 hours per week (meet multiple times a week) plus 24 prep time: Total course \$8,840 (tuition divided by number of students enrolled) MAX-6	\$0	0
	CNC (Trades) (only available at Hamden and Waterbury Staff-Secure REGIONS)	8 weeks 10 hours per week (meet multiple times a week) plus 24 prep time: Total course \$8,840 (tuition divided by number of students enrolled)	\$8,840	20
	Forklift Certification (only available in Hamden & Hartford Staff-Secure REGIONS)	8 weeks 10 hours per week (meet multiple times a week) plus 24 prep time: Total course \$8,840 (tuition divided by number of students enrolled)	\$0	0

	Veterinary Assistant*	8 weeks 10 hours per week (meet multiple times a week) plus 24 prep time: Total course \$8,840 (tuition divided by number of students enrolled) MAX-6	\$0	0
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*Only available in limited- secure and staff-secure locations from which youth can go into the community

to do clinical internship hours or at attend sessions at the mobile classroom.

**Only available in staff-secure locations – requires road hours.

***Only available at locations that have the needed equipment.

Appendix E
Staff Responsible for Discharge Planning by Program

Responsibility to Know*	Youth in Job-related Activities	Release Date	Youth Employed or in Vocational Program
CDRC	Case Manager	Clinician	Case Manager
	Program Manager	Program Manager	Program Manager
AMIR	Clinician	Clinician	Clinician
	Program Manager	Program Manager	Program Manager
AFIR	Clinician	Clinician	Clinician
	Program Manager	Program Manager	Program Manager
REGIONS Staff-Secure	Reintegration Mentor	Clinician	Reintegration Mentor
	Program Manager	Program Manager	Program Manager
REGIONS Limited-Secure (Journey House and Hamden Phase II)	Reintegration Mentor	Clinician	Reintegration Mentor
	Program Manager	Program Manager	Program Manager
REGIONS Hardware-Secure (Hamden Phase I)	Reintegration Mentor	Clinician	Reintegration Mentor
	Program Manager	Program Manager	Program Manager
REGIONS Hardware-Secure (Bridgeport and Hartford)	Classification and Program Officer (case manager)	Clinician	Classification and Program Officer (case manager)
	Unit Manager	Unit Manager	Unit Manager

*The juvenile probation officer is also responsible to know this information for their client.



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January JJPOC Meeting Minutes

January 16th, 2025

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

Legislative Office Building Location

Zoom Option Available

Attendance

Amy Marracino

Anthony Nolan

Catherine Osten

Charles Hewes

Christina Ghio

Christina Quaranta

Corey Paris

Daniel Karpowitz

Derrick Gordon

Erica Bromley

Gary Roberge

Gary Winfield

Hector Glynn

Heriberto Cajigas

Jillian Gilchrest

Jodi Hill-Lilly

Kim Binet

Martha Stone

Melanie Dykas

Michael Pierce

Paul Cicarella

Ray Dancy

Renee Cimino

Sharmese Walcott

Tais Ericson

Talitha Coggins

Tammy Ngyuen-O'Dowd

Toni Walker

TYJI Staff

Andrew Zhebrak

Brittany LaMarr

Erika Nowakowski

Eva Ott-Hill

Paul Klee

Ryan Connick

William Carbone

Welcome and Introductions

Representative Toni Walker and Undersecretary Daniel Karpowitz welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Overview of the Meeting

The January monthly meeting consisted of the JJPOC's voting on the recommendations presented by the Gender Responsiveness Workgroup and the Incarceration Workgroup.

Acceptance of JJPOC Meeting Minutes

Erika Nowakowski asked for a motion to accept the December 19th, 2024 meeting minutes. The motion was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.

Updates

The voting procedures for the meeting were then discussed and the meeting turned to the co-chairs, where they shared the importance of the JJPOC and the work that is being done among its attendees and members. During 2024, the JJPOC workgroups met over 75 times, which was commended as being a significant amount of effort that should not go without admiration. The JJPOC allows for many different individuals from over 100 professionals who have a professional and/or personal relationship with the work being done by the committee to come together and collaborate. In addition, during 2024 the committee produced three complete reports: Pre-Arrest Diversion, Diversion First, and the Reentry Success Plan. Therefore, the co-chairs reminded the committee that although members may not agree on every front, it is important to remember that the work is being done for the young people of Connecticut.

Gender Responsiveness Workgroup Recommendations

Two JJPOC members shared their appreciation for the work that has been and that is being done among the Gender Responsiveness Workgroup.

The Gender Responsiveness Workgroup presented two recommendations, and they are as follows: (1) “DCF should report to JJPOC by July 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, on the implementation of the new STTAR Plan released in March 2024. DCF report should include currently available metrics, and should consider developing additional metrics in September 2025 for subsequent annual reports” and (2) “DCF will submit to JJPOC by March 1, 2025 on how many calls it receives of possible/suspected child sexual abuse, including reports of abuse and neglect in out of home care settings; how many of those are substantiated; how many calls it receives of possible/suspected child sexual abuse are referred to regional multidisciplinary teams (MDTs); and any gaps in access to or capacity of the MDT system to meet the need.”

The Gender Responsiveness Workgroup recommendations were then brought to a vote where they passed with 27 yes votes, 0 no votes, 0 abstaining, and 17 not present.

Incarceration Workgroup Recommendations

The efforts of the Incarceration Workgroup were commended by a member of the JJPOC.

The Incarceration Workgroup presented three recommendations, and they are as follows: (1) “JBCSSD and DOC should submit to JJPOC by March 1, 2025, how much of the items listed below are happening, how many youth are utilizing the supports, what number of youth and families need the below services, and what is the difference between the demand for the below items. Additionally, they should ask families their need for the below items and submit an officially recorded anecdote on the utilization and need, to demonstrate barriers, considerations, and opportunities. DOC and JBCSSD may also identify, or offer suggestions of their own, for potential funding reallocations to support the items below. They should identify how many youth leave their facilities on supervision and end of sentence, and any appropriate or necessary partnership to deliver the provision of services below. (a) When a youth is admitted to a facility or contracted program, necessary transportation assistance to the youth’s identified family to visit the young person at the facility or contracted program at least twice a month. (b) The need for flex funds to support families in need for up to 6 months following a youth’s return home. Support may include but is not limited to housing assistance, basic needs, transportation, and vocational training. (c) The need for flex funds to youth and their family the ability to relocate if needed for safety reasons. Funds may cover moving, basic needs, and initial housing payments,” (2) “JBCSSD and DOC should submit to JJPOC by March 1, 2025, a list of vocational/employment programming they have and the limitations to connecting youth to opportunities in the community. They should provide an explanation on how they are connecting youth, and how many, to these opportunities prior to release. (a) Additionally, DOC and JBCSSD should identify the individual at each facility who is responsible for knowing the youth who are in job related activities, their release date, and how many youth released have an employer and/or connected to a vocational program. (b) Finally, DOC and JBCSSD should outline strategies and opportunities to address current limitations or inefficiencies in connecting youth to employment/testing/opportunities prior to release and during their time in facility,” and (3) There should be annual reporting of the above recommendations, as outlined in the quality assurance logic model reporting outlined in the Reentry Success Plan dated December 2024, using a secure data enclave to conduct the evaluation.”

The Incarceration Workgroup recommendations were then brought to a vote where they passed with 27 yes votes, 0 no votes, 0 abstaining, and 17 not present.



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Next Steps:

The Tow Youth Justice Institute (TYJI) will next provide the language of the recommendations to the legislators and will also send out fact sheets for the legislative session regarding the recommendations that passed as they make their way through the session, along with reminders for when a bill that originated from the JJPOC is being called for public hearing or deliberation.

Next Meeting:

Hybrid Model Option (In person and available over zoom)

February 27th, 2025

2:00 PM – 4:00 PM



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February JJPOC Meeting Minutes

February 27th, 2025

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

Legislative Office Building 2C

Zoom Option Available

Attendance

Betty Ann MacDonald	Jodi Hill-Lilly
Christina Ghio	Charles Hewes
Christina Quaranta	Anthony Nolan
Corey Paris	Hector Glynn
Daniel Karpowitz	Sharmese Walcott
Derrick Gordon	Melanie Dykas
Erica Bromley	Catherine Osten
Gary Roberge	Tammy Nguyen-O'Dowd
Gary Winfield	Elizabeth Bozzuto
Tammy Nuccio	Toni Walker
Paul Cicarella	

TYJI Staff

Andrew Zhebrak
 Brittany LaMarr
 Erika Nowakowski
 Izarelli Mendieta-Martinez
 Paul Klee
 Shelby Henderson-Griffiths
 Ryan Connick

Welcome and Introductions

Brittany LaMarr and Erika Nowakowski welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Overview of the Meeting

The February monthly meeting consisted of a review of the Youth Report and a youth panel from multiple different organizations across Connecticut, namely Connecticut Justice Alliance, Our Piece of the Pie, Center for Children’s Advocacy, Love146, and COMPASS; as well as young adults from Manson Youth Institute and REGIONS. There were four topics discussed by the young people, those being: goals and future aspirations, anticipated barriers, safety and support, and resources in the community.

Acceptance of JJPOC Meeting Minutes

There was no acceptance of the January 2025 JJPOC Meeting Minutes. This acceptance will be moved to the March 2025 JJPOC meeting.

Updates

No updates were provided. The meeting began with the playing of a song that was created by J. White who was sentenced to incarceration as a minor. Data points were given to each JJPOC member, which were shared with the entire group after the song ended.

Youth Report

The Youth Report is the product of the CEW Workgroup, which consists of five organizations: Love146, The Center for Children's Advocacy, Next Level Empowerment, Our Piece of the Pie, and the Connecticut Justice Alliance. The report aims to capture the voices of the young people across Connecticut and highlight the issues important to them. This first report focused on the communities that the organizations have the most access to, with a spotlight on New Haven, while future reports aim to cover additional communities across Connecticut.

Goals and Future Aspirations

The first question asked to the young people was "How do you see yourself contributing to society when you achieve your goals?" Many answers from the young people were given, including being a leader, a source of support, giving back to others, and bridging the gap of services and disparities.

The second question asked to the young people was "What is your motivation for wanting to guide youth onto the right path?" where personal experience was an important motivator. The conversation then pivoted to explore potential barriers.

Anticipated Barriers

A question was asked to the young people regarding the barriers they anticipate when trying to accomplish their goals. Many of the young people shared that their own community, financial struggles, poor and negative company, lack of mental health support, and stress and pressure were sources of barriers. Roughly 15% of the young people surveyed for the Youth Report answered that finances were a concern of theirs. Another question was asked to them regarding what they believe could help them overcome these barriers, to which youth answered that additional

school resources and additional mental health support were needed across the state. The conversation then pivoted to explore safety and support.

Safety and Support

39.5% of youth surveyed for the Youth Report recorded that they always felt unsafe in their community when asked “How often do you feel unsafe in your community?” The youth panel participants were asked how safe they feel in their community and what support they need. Many of the youth reported that they do feel safe and supported but added the caveat that there are unsafe aspects to their communities that cause them to be on higher alert. One individual disclosed that he does not feel safe in his community because of the prevalence of gun violence, drug use, and domestic violence. Many youths also described how they thought their community was safe but now realize they were just immune to the dangers.

Many of the youths described their families as being their source of support. Regarding supports that the youth believe they need to prosper are a loving support system, additional safe places to resort to and spend time in like a recreational center, greater family and community involvement, mentors outside of school, positive peer groups in school, and more one-on-one interaction. A consensus was arrived at by the young people that other teenagers need a supportive mentor who understands them in their life to succeed. The conversation then pivoted to resources in the community.

Resources in the Community

The youth panel was then asked what resources they feel are lacking in their community that they believe would have helped them if they were available. Many of the young people mentioned mental health services, support services, recreational centers, career development and mentors both inside and outside of the school environment. A young person also mentioned more transparent avenues for access to these resources is necessary for those in the community who do not know how to access them. Another individual explained how access to transportation is needed in the Hartford area, which includes the removal of financial and other access barriers. Financial barriers continue to be highlighted by the young people as reasons they are not able to access resources in the community. Economic disparities were mentioned as being a significant barrier for young people and how they experience everyday life.

Some of the young people highlighted organizations like Domus, Project Legacy, Speak Up, Hartford City Mission, and Our Piece of the Pie as being beneficial to

them and the larger community, and they share the importance of having mentors that have similar interests and experiences as them.

The importance of available mental health services was also mentioned due to the increasing stress and pressure that young people experience, whether that originates from academic, social, and/or extracurricular sources, and generational trauma. There continues to exist a stigma around mental health that can be combated by accessible and affordable mental health services. Social media continues to influence young people in the community and contributes to low self-esteem. The violence the young people in the community experience leads to increased needs for mental health and therapy services as well. For instance, the elevated levels of PTSD that young people experience in struggling communities was highlighted.

Gratitude was shared on behalf of the JJPOC membership towards the young people and their willingness to share their experiences. The importance of hearing from the people who are directly impacted by juvenile justice and the work of the JJPOC was highlighted. The young people were then asked about whether they felt like they had a childhood, to which some explained that they do feel like they had a childhood while others do not, where many of the young people felt like they rushed their childhood.

Next Meeting:

Hybrid Model Option (In person and available over zoom)

March 20th, 2025

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM