



Juvenile Justice  
Advisory Group

# Annual Report 2019

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**New York State Juvenile Justice Advisory Group (JJAG)  
2019 Annual Report**

The U.S. Congress requires the Juvenile Justice Advisory Group to report to the Governor and Legislature annually. This report fulfills that requirement for 2019.

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## *I. Introduction and Background*

The federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP) was enacted in 1974 and reauthorized in 2002 and 2018. The law created the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to support state and local delinquency prevention efforts and juvenile justice system improvement; established grant programs; and outlined federal standards, known as core protections, for the care and custody of justice-involved youth.

Among other modifications, the 2018 reauthorization of the JJDP provided updates to the core protections, restructured the prevention components of the Act, expanded OJJDP research and evaluation purposes, and increased reporting requirements and accountability. These changes took effect Oct. 1, 2019 (Federal Fiscal Year 2020).

New York State Executive Order 80 (1986) established the Juvenile Justice Advisory Group (JJAG) as the required state advisory group for overseeing the development and implementation of the state plan, supervising the distribution of federal delinquency prevention funds and monitoring compliance with federal juvenile justice mandates. Board members are appointed by the Governor and represent a range of juvenile justice stakeholders: criminal justice, human services, court and research professionals, advocates, formerly justice-involved youth, community members and others.

The same Executive Order designates the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) as the state agency that supervises the preparation of the state's juvenile justice plan, administers the plan and manages federal delinquency prevention funding allocated to New York. DCJS' Office of Youth Justice (OYJ) provides administrative support to the JJAG and oversees the implementation and monitoring of contracts on the advisory group's behalf.

The agency also collaborates with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) on some juvenile justice initiatives. In 2017, 2018 and 2019, DCJS, OCFS and other state agencies worked closely to implement New York's landmark Raise the Age law, which raised the age of criminal responsibility to 18 over a two-year period. Effective Oct. 1, 2018, 16-year-olds were no longer charged as adults; on Oct. 1, 2019, the law took effect for 17-year-olds. The [Annual DCJS Performance Report 2017-2018](#) contains additional detail about the agency's work.

The JJAG oversees distribution of approximately \$2.1 million annually in federal grants to fund delinquency prevention, effective interventions to justice-involved youth and juvenile justice systems improvement. In addition, the JJAG monitors the state's compliance with the four core requirements of the federal law:

- sight and sound separation of juvenile delinquents from adult offenders;
- deinstitutionalization of status offenders;
- removal of juvenile delinquents from adult jails and lockups and
- reduction of disproportionate minority contact in the juvenile justice system.

## ***II. Federal Mandates: Compliance and Monitoring***

States receiving federal Title II formula grant funding are required to comply with four core protections guaranteed by the JJDP. DCJS contracts with the state Commission of Correction (SCOC) to monitor and ensure compliance with the following three requirements, which are related to permissible methods of confinement for youth.

- **Deinstitutionalization of status offenders** prohibits placing youth deemed to be persons in need of supervision in secure detention or correctional facilities.
- **Separation of juveniles from adult offenders** requires that juveniles who are alleged or found to have been delinquent and/or persons in need of supervision must not have any contact with adult inmates awaiting trial or convicted of a crime.
- **Removal of juveniles from adult jails and lockups** prohibits using adult jails and lockups to confine juveniles for any length of time.

SCOC has statutory authority to perform monitoring of correctional facilities across the state. Existing state laws meet or exceed federally mandated requirements for the custody and detention of status offenders and non-offenders; separation of juveniles from adult offenders; and removal of juveniles from adult jails and lockups. Because of this, facilities in New York State either meet or exceed federal requirements by complying with state law.

SCOC maintains a monitoring schedule that ensures that all adult jails, lockups and secure facilities for juveniles are inspected at least every three years. These facilities are required to report certain incidents to the Commission, which reviews these events and acts, as deemed appropriate. OCFS and New York City's Administration for Children's Services (ACS) are responsible for operating juvenile facilities throughout the state. SCOC and DCJS have agreements in place permitting onsite inspections and reviews of records in all juvenile facilities throughout the state to ensure compliance with federal standards.

New York's strategy for reducing racial and ethnic disparities (RED) in the juvenile justice system includes a state-level compliance management effort; support of local reforms, implementation of best practices that are designed to reduce disproportionate minority contact, and technical assistance to local government and nonprofit organizations. Title II funds support a full-time, statewide RED coordinator at DCJS to monitor and improve the reporting of race and ethnicity-related data; identify and provide guidance on implementing best practices; and provide technical assistance and training on racial and ethnic disparities for local and state-level stakeholders.

The RED coordinator is responsible for monitoring compliance with strategies to reduce disproportionate minority representation in the juvenile justice system across the state using the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's five-phase RED Reduction Model. This includes working with state and local entities to enhance the quality and quantity of data measuring disproportionality, collaborating with localities to investigate root causes of disproportionality when it is found, and implementing strategies to reduce racial and ethnic disparities.

For example, the RED coordinator provides training and technical assistance to local and statewide partners, helping to identify policies and practices that may contribute to disparate treatment of minority youth in the system. Training includes both the historical perspective of race equity and the impact that implicit bias has on decision making. In 2019, the Coordinator:

- partnered with the DCJS Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives, which offers the Fundamentals of Probation Practice (FPP) training for new probation officers to train those individuals about racial and ethnic disparities and the mind-science of implicit bias, racial anxiety and stereotype threat;
- provided technical assistance for the creation of priority areas for the New York State RED Advisory Committee to:
  - develop a bench card for youth justice professionals regarding equity;
  - issue best practice guidance around data collection and assist with data collection issues pertaining to race and ethnicity;
  - issue a best practice/guidance document on the process of blinding decision-making points;
  - create a cross-system, cross-agency glossary of equity-related terminology; and
  - develop and implement an equity summit to highlight the intersectionality of disparity across multiple youth-serving domains;
- provided presentations on racial and ethnic disparities at local and national conferences;
- supported the state's Regional Youth Justice Teams (RYJT) and other cross-agency groups working to address RED.

### ***III. Juvenile Justice Advisory Group Activities***

The JJAG met quarterly, alternating primary meeting sites in Albany and New York City. These meetings covered a range of topics, including summary presentations of select projects; reviews of federal funding commitments and balances; briefings on state and federal juvenile justice initiatives; and discussions of policy and funding priorities.

The OYJ at DCJS provides support staff to the advisory group by managing meeting logistics, providing programmatic oversight for projects and developing funding solicitations based on the group's identified priorities, in addition to other administrative functions. The DCJS Office of Program Development and Funding (OPDF) oversees contracts and budgets to ensure compliance with federal funding requirements. New York State juvenile justice data are collected by several state and local agencies, including OCFS, the Office of Court Administration (OCA), the Office of the New York City Criminal Justice Coordinator, ACS, and the New York City Police Department. Partnering with these agencies and others, the DCJS Office of Justice Research and Performance (OJRP) compiles and analyzes juvenile justice data to produce a statewide picture of juvenile justice trends.

The JJAG continued to monitor ongoing projects and implemented several new initiatives in alignment with the updated three-year plan for juvenile justice.

## **A. Three-Year Plan for Juvenile Justice (2018 – 2020)**

Federal law requires states to develop three-year plans outlining long-range strategies for use of Title II Formula funds. During interim years, states submit annual applications that update accomplishments, provide juvenile justice data and demonstrate compliance with the federal law's core protections.

In 2019, the JJAG continued its progress on the initiatives first started under the 2015 – 2017 three-year plan and authorized awards to build upon that work. It also placed targeted focus on four additional priorities identified as part of a 2018 strategic planning process, leading to its 2018 – 2020 three-year plan and 2019 activities:

**Priority Area 1:** Improve capacity of decision-makers to match response to the risks and needs of youth who become involved in New York State's juvenile justice system.

### ***Raise the Age Implementation***

As noted, New York State's law raised the age of criminal responsibility in two phases. The law prohibits 16- and 17-year-olds from being held in adult jails and prisons; makes substantive changes to the procedures and mechanisms used to process 16- and 17-year-olds in the criminal and youth justice systems; allows for additional services for youth; and alters the types of detention and/or placement to which they may be subjected. The law extends Juvenile Delinquency (JD) classification to include 16- and 17-year-olds in most cases in which the alleged crime is a misdemeanor. It creates the new category of adolescent offender and establishes a Youth Part of Criminal Court to handle 16- and 17-year-olds charged with serious offenses. Juvenile justice professionals statewide, working with officials from DCJS and other state agencies, continued to adjust their practices to accommodate 16-year-olds in the system and plan for the integration of 17-year-olds during the first three quarters of 2019. In Oct. 1, 2019, 17-year-olds began entering the new system, and juvenile justice professionals across New York State continued to make necessary adjustments and plan for the first full year of Raise the Age in 2020.

**Priority Area 2:** All justice-involved youth will be treated fairly and equitably and will have access to appropriate services, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, class and/or culture.

### ***Race Equity Work***

DCJS continued to work with Center on Children's Law and Policy on the development of the state's new three-year plan to advance equity and reduce disparities. The plan includes the following goals and objectives:

- enhancing data capacity, collection and analysis;
- providing leadership development opportunities and technical assistance to statewide and local stakeholders;
- targeting interventions in counties with high disparity rates; and
- implementing program and policy changes, as necessary.

In addition, OYJ partnered with the Center for Children's Law and Policy (CCLP) to create new training, technical assistance and skill-building opportunities designed to support youth justice professionals and

local officials implementing policies and reforms that target areas of significant racial and ethnic disparity in the youth justice system. A new policy academy will be delivered in partnership with the New York State Youth Justice Institute (YJI) at the University of Albany. It will convene over a 12-month period and consist of two in-person skill-building and planning opportunities for local officials to help equip them with the knowledge base and leadership skills to promote effective efforts to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the youth justice system.

The Policy Academy will also focus on the development and implementation of concrete policy, practice and program changes to address racial and ethnic disparities at one particular decision point, such as diversion at intake or admissions to detention. Participants will be assigned to complete pre-work before participating in each in-person session, and they will receive technical assistance and support afterward to support workplan development and implementation of reforms in their jurisdictions.

### ***Mind Science of Bias Trainings***

In February of 2019, DCJS OYJ completed a four-part series on leadership and the Mind Science of Bias training for LaSalle School in Albany. The capstone of the Albany County RED Certificate Team provided managers and supervisors with training on how to engage their staff on this work, how to allow individuals in the organization to lead the efforts to address implicit bias and racial anxiety and the impacts it has on daily practice and clients served by the organization. An introduction to the Mind Science of Bias training was also provided at the Juvenile Detention Association Conference in Saratoga Springs.

### ***Georgetown Racial and Ethnic Disparities Certificate Program***

DCJS sent a team from Tompkins County to the Georgetown Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities Certificate Program in Washington, D.C. After completing the program, Tompkins County staff developed their Race Equity Plan for Success (REPS) with an initial emphasis on prevention services by reducing education-related referrals to the juvenile justice system.

### ***My Brother's Keeper Symposium***

The New York State Board of Regents established the Regents Workgroup to Improve Outcomes for Boys and Young Men of Color in May 2015 in response to the national My Brother's Keeper (MBK) initiative. The workgroup was charged with examining the current educational challenges and opportunities faced by boys and young men of color as well as making policy, budget and legislative recommendations that address these challenges, while expanding opportunities to increase success. The JJAG approved the SED liaison position later that year to align with DCJS and include a connection to the MBK initiative and the workgroup. As a result, the JJAG approved funding to assist with the MBK Annual Symposium in May 2019.

**Priority Area 3:** Build community capacity for providing youth with prosocial, developmentally appropriate supports.

### ***Connecting Youth in Transition***

DCJS and SED were awarded a federal Performance Partnership Pilot (P3) grant specifically targeted to improving outcomes for disconnected youth in the cities of Albany and Rochester. Transition coordinators were hired at each site to work with a school district and a designated community partner to identify youth,

ages 14 to 24, who have become disconnected from school due to excessive, unexcused absences, dropping out and/or recent juvenile justice system involvement. Youth who enter the program at each site work with the transition coordinator in three phases designed to foster and sustain a positive outcome. The program aims to have youth either resume or complete school and/or be gainfully employed and identify a positive adult role model to guide them forward.

The pilot program, which began in October 2018, is designed to serve 60 youth at each location and to measure how much of an impact consistent guidance has on a participant's ability to become reconnected. While all youth will engage with the transition coordinator through check-ins, some youth will be closely guided through each step of the process. Some will be given a case plan and tasked with navigating to success on their own. This pilot program will be evaluated by researchers at SUNY Plattsburgh.

In 2019, the program served 80 youth; 39 in the City of Albany and 41 in the City of Rochester. Males made up a clear majority of youth served, representing approximately 68 percent of participants. Youth of color represented approximately 88 percent of youth served. Approximately 74 percent of youth involved in the program had contact with the justice system within the six months preceding enrollment. Approximately 23 percent of youth enrolled in the program had dropped out of school or were absent at least 20 consecutive days. Approximately 10 percent of youth reported both dropping out of school and having justice system contact within six months prior to enrollment.

Program activities were scheduled to end at both sites in June 2020. SUNY Plattsburgh plans to publish reports on its evaluation by the end of 2020.

### ***State Education Department (SED) Liaison***

The overall goal of the SED liaison position is to establish professional school representation in juvenile justice activities and initiatives, increasing communication throughout the education system to enhance the chances of success for youth and promote collaboration, as education is vital.

The SED liaison has brought the educational perspective to the Partnership for Youth Justice (PYJ) and other committees and workgroups, including the Trauma Champion Collaborative. In the summer of 2019, the liaison was instrumental in helping SED with Restorative Practices trainings, which had been the focus of the Western New York RYJT. The liaison also has been assisting with programming for the Connecting Youth in Transition project.

This has fostered:

- a better understanding of the various offices in SED, such as the Office of Student Supports, and how they may intersect with points in the juvenile justice system, such as reentry from placement/detention and mentoring initiatives like MBK;
- a better understanding of how to navigate effective collaboration with SED; and
- recognition of the importance of education in effecting systems change.

The MOU for the position of the SED liaison was scheduled to expire in September 2020.

**Priority Area 4:** Enhance state and local capacity for utilizing data-driven decision-making and evidence-based practices.

***New York State Youth Justice Institute***

The YJI hired permanent Executive Director Giza Lopes, Ph.D., in July 2019 and began expanding operations.

During her first few months, Executive Director Lopes established a vision for the YJI to become the premier resource for evidence-based policy and practice, nationally and internationally, by implementing the following strategies.

**Strategy #1:** Serve as an information hub for stakeholders by

- issuing briefs, brochures, dashboards and chartbooks;
- increasing digital presence with websites, apps and podcasts;
- engaging through media (e.g., press releases) and social media; and
- engaging in active outreach, including listservs and one-on-one meetings.

**Strategy #2:** Cultivate and continually support practitioners' commitment to evidence-based practices through:

- excellence in training for different goals/audiences through webinars, train-the-trainer workshops and other efforts;
- effective technical assistance that is responsive to identified or communicated needs; and
- relevant continued education opportunities (e.g., professional certificates).

**Strategy #3:** Develop a prolific and ever-growing network of research expertise by:

- investing in future generations of juvenile justice researchers through internship opportunities and fellowship programs;
- leveraging current academic expertise by establishing affiliated faculty and collaborating with other centers; and
- conducting original research.

**Strategy #4:** Foster and sustain synergy among stakeholders and others by:

- bringing together government agencies, practitioners and academics to advance and share knowledge, brainstorm innovations and engage in agenda-setting (i.e., through summits, symposia, seminars and workshops).

**Strategy #5:** Leverage current public investment to attract external funding that will enable the YJI to grow by:

- identifying and pursuing external sources of funding, including private foundations; and
- identifying possible areas of affinity with other departments and applying collectively for grants.

The impact of the YJI depends on staff resources and its presence at, and affiliation with, a reputable university. Below is a brief summary of staffing, roles and responsibilities to help the YJI to achieve its vision.

- Executive Director – This position is responsible for the development and overall management of the YJI. Responsibilities include strategically leading a team of staff, conducting and directing research activities, identifying and overseeing the work of consultants and creating seamless relationships with YJI partners.
- Associate for Technical Assistance – This position will provide support for localities through the RYJTs and other relevant entities under the advice of DCJS, OCFS and the PYJ.
- YJI Scholars – The YJI has recruited nine undergraduate and graduate students from diverse departments at the University at Albany – State University of New York. The students contribute to the day-to-day activities and deliverables of the YJI, including editing the monthly newsletter, participating in meetings organized by numerous state-level committees and sub-committees and creating/maintaining social media content.
- Affiliated Faculty – The YJI has attracted two stellar youth justice scholars, Megan Kurlychek, Ph.D., and Alan Lizotte, Ph.D., to join as affiliated faculty and plans to add others.
- Research Associate – This position will assist the executive director and associate for technical assistance in implementing evaluation research across New York State.
- Graduate Research Assistants – These positions assist with core obligations of the YJI and provide support with research and technical assistance, including handling long-term projects.
- Administrative Assistant – This position is responsible for running the office, scheduling meetings, organizing events and completing all other logistical functions of the YJI.

The following is a list of action items developed to fulfill the goals outlined above.

### **Strategy #1: Serve as an information hub for stakeholders.**

#### **YJI Website**

The YJI is overhauling its website. The new website launch aims to be more user-friendly, while simplifying access to the YJI's ranking of evidence-based programs.

#### **Social Media**

The executive director has developed a more robust presence on social media with YJI profiles on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. Each week, the YJI publishes relevant information, including "Did you know?" posts on all social media platforms. The number of followers in each platform grows daily, amplifying the presence and brand of the YJI well beyond New York State.

#### **Dashboards**

The new website supports the creation and publication of dashboards to translate data findings and other relevant information for laypersons in ways that are accessible, easy to consume and interactive. Staff are trained on the development of the dashboards, using Tableau software.

**Strategy #2:** Cultivate and continually support practitioners' commitment to evidence-based practices.

### **Evidence-Based Programs**

The updated website improves access to the existing repository of evidence-based program rankings. The YJI is actively updating the repository and refining the ranking methodology. Newly identified and ranked evidence-based programs will be added to the website routinely.

### **Racial and Ethnic Disparities Policy Academy**

The YJI is working with DCJS staff to develop and establish a new Racial and Ethnic Disparities Policy Academy.

### **Best Practice Guidelines for Police and Community Partners**

The YJI is leading and organizing the development of a strategy to bring police, community partners and youth together to implement effective juvenile justice system tools, trainings and responses across New York State.

### **BRIDGES Program**

The YJI will enable the creation of BRIDGES, a new program designed to match advanced doctorate students from the School of Criminal Justice and other departments at the University at Albany with providers and staff in relevant agencies in New York State to analyze data and research youth justice needs.

### **Implementation Science**

The YJI will assist youth justice professionals in applying implementation science as they roll out new programs and initiatives. According to [OJJDP](#), “the overall goal of implementation science in the juvenile justice field is to find different strategies to encourage and facilitate the use of research on what works and what doesn't work, in order to improve the policies and practices that directly affect at-risk and justice-involved youth.” This approach ensures that interventions live up to their potential, maximize meaningful impact on target populations and promote sustainability.

### **Technical Assistance Requests**

The YJI is developing a process for receiving technical assistance requests from the RYJTs and other local organizations. The process includes gathering ideas from potential stakeholders about the types of technical assistance that would be helpful to them. It identifies the method by which requests would be made and establishes protocols for reviewing, prioritizing and accepting requests.

### **YJI Certificate Programs**

Similar to the certificate programs offered by the Georgetown Center for Juvenile Justice Reform, the YJI seeks to develop two or three certificate programs within the University at Albany over the next few years. Below is a list of possible topics for the certificate programs. The YJI would appreciate input on the following topics from the JJAG and other partners:

- trauma/healing;
- implementation science;
- youth justice leadership;
- youth gangs;

- engagement; and
- mentoring.

### **Georgetown School Justice Partnerships and Diversion Pathways Certificate Program**

The YJI has served as a fiscal vehicle to enable several New York teams to attend a certificate program offered by the Georgetown Center for Juvenile Justice Reform.

### **Continuing Legal Education (CLE) and Continuing Education Unit (CEU) Credits**

The YJI seeks to offer CLE and CEU credits for relevant trainings and assistance, which will help boost marketability and is a potential source of revenue.

**Strategy #3:** Develop a prolific and ever-growing network of research expertise.

### **Youth with Sexual Behavior Problems Literature Review**

YJI staff produced a meta-analytic literature review of over 400 publications on the topic of Youth with Sexual Behavior Problems (YSBP). The literature review has been delivered and next steps may include a feasibility study, if the agencies involved deem it necessary. The literature reviewed for this publication will also be transformed into a dashboard for publication on the YJI's website.

### **Original Research**

As part of its vision, the YJI will embark on the development of original research projects that will support DCJS, OCFS and other partners. A process for soliciting requests for research projects will be developed and will include criteria for prioritization and selection. An example of a potential project would include the evaluation of a home-grown program developed by a Regional Youth Justice Team or other local partners.

**Strategy #4:** Foster and sustain synergy among stakeholders and others.

### **Healing-Centered Engagement Retreat**

The YJI plans to co-host a Healing Centered Engagement Retreat, with DCJS, for approximately 100 participants. The retreat will be moderated by staff from Flourish Agenda, which secured a contract through an RFP issued by the YJI/University.

### **Webinar Series: “Lunch & Learn”**

The YJI will launch a webinar series featuring cutting-edge research experts whose work can benefit youth justice practitioners. Titled “Lunch & Learn,” these hour-long webinars will take place at lunchtime once a month. The kickoff session will be delivered by Lynette Tannis, Ed.D., known for her work on educating incarcerated youth. CLE credits and other continued education accreditation are being pursued for future webinars.

### **Podcast Series: “Let’s Talk About Youth Justice”**

In line with the YJI's commitment to making research findings available to a wider audience, YJI scholars are producing a podcast series. The first podcast episode will feature an interview with University of Missouri – St. Louis (UMSL) Comprehensive School Safety Initiative Project Director Timothy McCuddy, Ph.D., about a longitudinal study on school safety, funded by the National Institute of Justice. Additional episodes will reflect priority areas identified by the PYJ.

## **National and Local Networking**

The executive director and staff at the YJI have shared the work of the YJI at diverse national conferences and local events. This is expected to continue. Executive Director Lopes has been invited to present a lecture on youth justice at Union College. Finally, the University at Albany's media department will feature the YJI scholars in a future issue of the University's magazine.

**Strategy #5:** Leverage current public investment to attract external funding that will enable the YJI to grow.

## **External Funding**

The YJI is committed to seeking funding that will help it grow and move toward self-sustainability over the next couple of years.

The YJI will continue to pursue grants that align with its vision and strategies and seek funding from other sources, such as philanthropic foundations.

## **B. Special Projects**

### ***Youth with Sexual Behaviors Problems***

DCJS continued the work it began in 2018 to develop a strategy for statewide implementation, scalability and sustainability. To assist with this strategy, the YJI began conducting a literature review to assess best practices in the field. A work group of state agency professionals was also established to develop a statewide needs assessment of existing processes and protocols in each county to determine gaps and needs. The work group began meeting in October 2019 and is expected to continue its work throughout 2020 and beyond. In addition, the Western New York and Finger Lakes RYJTs have set aside some grant funds to train teams of clinicians in the Oklahoma University model in 2020. This project will help to inform the statewide strategy being developed by the work group.

### ***Partnership for Youth Justice (PYJ) Regional Representatives***

Through its participation in the PYJ, an interagency state-level collaborative focused on youth justice and child welfare issues, DCJS contributed to the establishment and implementation of the regional representative to increase local voices at the state level. The role of the regional representative is to serve as a two-way information conduit between the state and localities. A two-day convention of the regional representatives was hosted in November 2019 to strategize the implementation of this new initiative. The regional representatives and the PYJ will meet quarterly. The regional representatives identified priority areas, based on local needs, that the PYJ will focus on, in addition existing focal areas. The new priority areas include gender responsiveness, transition-aged youth and electronic monitoring.

### ***Community Resolve Program***

The Community Resolve Program (CRP) is a collaboration of New York City Department of Probation (DOP), the New York State Unified Court System (NYS UCS) and four New York City-area nonprofit Community Dispute Resolution Centers (CDRCs). CRP uses a restorative justice approach to repair harm caused by youth engaged in criminal activity and strives to meet the needs of victims and the community, prevent further involvement in the justice system and assist participating youth in gaining a greater understanding of the harm that they have caused. The target population for the program are

complainants and youth who are arrested, under the jurisdiction of Family Court, on assault or robbery cases that are suitable for adjustment. The CRP engages youth who are involved in the juvenile justice system, those impacted by their behavior, including complainants (also referred to as victims), as well as family members and others in circles of support.

Services are offered collaboratively by DOP probation officers (PO) and the CDRCs and would include options in three general categories:

- services that assist arrested youth in improving behavior and repairing harm;
- services that assist complainants and others affected by the incident; and
- services that provide an opportunity for direct interaction between arrested youth and complainants.

This approach is designed to meet the needs of victims and the community, prevent further involvement with the criminal justice system and assist participating youth in gaining a greater understanding of the harm that they have caused. Funding in 2019 was used for staff training.

### ***Trauma Champions Collaborative***

In June 2019, OYJ convened a Trauma Champions Collaborative (TCC) comprised of professionals from multiple state agencies to begin building statewide capacity and structures that support state and local government and professional agencies in integrating a trauma-informed approach into all aspects of their work. The initial collaborative was a multi-month learning process facilitated by the University at Buffalo's Institute of Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care (ITTIC). Upon completion of the learning process in September 2019, the TCC began developing strategies to put its collective knowledge into practice and has invited additional professionals and agencies to participate. The TCC currently consists of 34 "champions" from 15 agencies and will continue to implement effective change in the area of trauma.

## **C. Support for Regional Youth Justice Teams**

Nine RYJTs continued their work fostering cross-county, multi-disciplinary approaches to juvenile justice programs and policy work. The Office of Youth Justice staff serve as liaisons between the teams and the state, advising the teams of state-level trends and initiatives, while communicating local concerns and accomplishment to state agencies and other state-level policymakers.

The YJI convened and hosted team co-chairs for two-days to allow them to share highlights of team activities and barriers, as well as to provide a framework that teams could use to continue their work. DCJS continued assisting the teams in developing and implementing plans for a round of grant funding, authorized by the JJAG, that began in April 2019. Each team identified projects relevant to the challenges that are prevalent in their regions. A summary of the funding proposals by team is as follows:

### ***Capital Region***

The Capital Region team identified an ongoing challenge to prevent youth from entering the juvenile justice system and to support their well-being once they became involved with the justice system. The inherent complexity of the system, combined with an absence of a comprehensive regional policy, demonstrated the need for a strategic plan. During strategic plan development, eight uniquely important

sub-issues were used to create team sub-committees. They include: restorative practices; reintegration; trauma-informed care; racial and ethnic disparities; school justice; youth, family and community engagement; children of incarcerated parents; and poverty and economic development. Each sub-committee was invited to submit a proposal for consideration for this round of funding. After an anonymous team vote, five of the proposals were approved as follows:

- a coordinator to oversee family engagement and work to reduce ethnic disparities, including implicit bias training, family engagement training, “check your bias” assistance cards, community heroes program and mind science of bias training, for all levels of probation and social services staff;
- attendance mediation services designed for and delivered to three districts within the region through a partnership with mediation centers. Attendance mediation aims to improve attendance by building communication between families and schools through mediation and is unique among existing programs in our region. The early intervention initiative, responding to the increased evidence that repeated chronic truancy begins during a child’s elementary years and that truancy during one academic year is highly predictive of future attendance problems. The program also is unique in addressing chronic tardiness, another indicator of future truancy. During attendance mediation, the mediator works with families and school representatives to identify and address the complex factors that cause truancy for the child;
- a collaborative of “champions” from each of the team’s counties to attend and receive the University at Buffalo’s Trauma Champions training. The selection of members of the CRYJT and other agencies that specifically work with juveniles will allow this program to serve youth ages 7 to 17. It will serve all youth in all counties that send participants and it can include professionals from several disciplines, including education, courts, probation and law enforcement, depending on the roles of participants;
- funding of an outside entity to work through all of the grant requirements; and
- dual focus on a sustained learning and demonstration project of the Reintegration Strategic Plan (best practices). The team would like to achieve the effective implementation of the Reintegration Strategic Plan techniques within at least one county Interdisciplinary Team to include a voluntary agency residential program and train-the-trainer training across the nine counties of the Capital Region Youth Justice Team. This funding would support the integration of the training curriculum and implementation guide, as well as the train-the-trainer component for other counties in the region. This final step in the process is based directly on the implementation of the Reintegration Continuum Model, which is an evidence-based practice and contains components such as cognitive-behavioral interventions and skills training.

### ***Central New York***

The Central New York team established the goal that all youth involved in the juvenile justice system in the region can learn from their mistakes and stay in their communities safely to get culturally appropriate community-based services and support to thrive in their homes, schools and communities and successfully transition to adulthood. The team decided to use its grant funding to build on a body of work they have already undertaken around data-driven initiatives to improve the lives of youth impacted by the system. To accomplish this, they plan to:

- establish a point-person in each county trained in Results Based Leadership (RBL) and Facilitation to advance the work identified by their RYJT and to track progress and outcomes; (To date, they have identified their RBL class, acquired the Casey Foundation for nationally recognized trainers and selected training dates for six sessions to occur over the next year.)
- host a Regional Summit allowing eight to 10 stakeholder members from each county to attend a results-focused training that will allow team members to hear from field experts about reform efforts that work and address public safety, while protecting the ability of children to become productive adults; (Topics were identified through a survey disseminated to all counties in the region and the team will work to identify and recruit subject matter experts to present on selected topics.)
- assist counties throughout the region to gain the capacity and knowledge to impact results in areas of the juvenile justice system that are most in need of reform or areas with the highest levels of community motivation for change.

### ***Finger Lakes***

The Finger Lakes team experienced a change in leadership that prompted a strategic planning session by an external facilitator in October 2019 to establish priority areas. The team is working toward building sustainable community capacity to address regionally identified priority juvenile justice issues and enhance responses to at-risk and justice-involved youth through training and implementation of evidence-based interventions. The team will focus on two initiatives:

- Build and Enhance Trauma-Informed Services:
  - In the first phase, a selected agency within each county will be given a baseline assessment of their current trauma-informed policies and practices to identify areas for possible improvement.
  - In the second phase, an expert will provide technical assistance to implement trauma-informed policies and practices, identified through baseline assessments.
- Train Clinicians in a Youth with Sexual Behavior Problems Practice Model:
  - Training in the Oklahoma University (OU) Adolescent Model for youth with sexual behavior problems will be provided for nine clinicians in the Finger Lakes region in a joint effort with the Western New York RYJT.

### ***Long Island***

On Long Island, probation supervision is very focused on actual supervision and treatment services in traditional settings that do not provide youth and probation officers the opportunity to interact genuinely. Mandated services offer little opportunity for youth to participate in activities that can help strengthen protective factors and promote positive community engagement. By strengthening protective factors, community engagement and exposure to positive activities and places, the hope is to lower recidivism and create positive community ties.

A pilot arts project, loosely based on the NYC NeON Center, will work with justice-involved youth, in partnership with the local community colleges, community members, and probation officers, to engage in creative projects in dance, music, theatre, visual arts, poetry and digital media.

- Each County will offer a specific area for youth to engage in.
  - Sessions will be 6-8 weeks long; 1 – 2 days per week.
  - Youth will be provided transportation to community college campuses for the program (facilitated by probation departments).
  - Probation officers will also participate in the activities with the youth, in an to improve relationships outside of a traditional setting.
  - At the end of each session, participating youth will be able to display their talents and creations at a showcase that will be open to the communities.
  - Youth will also be connected with resources in their local communities to help them continue working on their craft.

There has been interest from both local community colleges, and the team is working on necessary agreements to begin the program.

### ***Mid-Hudson***

The Mid-Hudson team chose to focus their efforts on trauma, striving to produce a region that is operating as trauma informed and speaking the same language across disciplines in relation to trauma and trauma-informed practice/care. The team will implement several initiatives to improve the trauma-responsiveness of the region including:

- *ARTIC (Attitudes Related to Trauma Informed Care)*: an assessment tool used to determine organizational and employee attitudes toward trauma-informed care. The idea is to enable use of this tool to establish a baseline related to organizational readiness and subsequently determine where training is needed. Once training has occurred, or the appropriate organizational changes have been made, the ARTIC will be revisited as an evaluation tool to measure changes and progress toward being trauma informed. The TRUST (Trauma Responsive Understanding Self-Assessment Tool) is also being considered as a method of assessment.
- *Handle with Care*: If a law enforcement officer encounters a child during a call, that child's name and three words, "HANDLE WITH CARE," are forwarded to the school/childcare agency before the next school day starts. The school implements individual, class- and school-wide, trauma-sensitive curricula so that a potentially traumatized child is handled with care. If a child needs more intervention, onsite trauma-informed mental healthcare would be available.
- *Youth Mental Health First Aid*: an evidence-based program designed to help adults who regularly interact with youth so they can assist youth who are in crisis or experiencing a challenge related to their mental health. A train-the-trainer model for 60 participants will allow certification of instructors who can then conduct trainings in their agencies and their communities.
- *Risking Connection*: an evidence-informed, train-the-trainer model that focuses on relational aspects of healing and resiliency, with particular emphasis on staff wellness and the notion of secondary trauma. This model will provide staff tools to enhance the effectiveness of trauma-specific treatments, while also taking care to reduce the presence of vicarious trauma.
- *Resilience Coalitions*: Westchester County has been successful in introducing the notion of trauma to community members through the screening of the movie "Resilience," conducting Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) surveys and discussions about the complexities of trauma in settings like churches. They have engaged over 2,500 people in communities throughout the

county. With the understanding that most people are impacted by trauma, the Resilience Coalition works to help communities educate themselves, brainstorm solutions to build resiliency and advocate for the needs of their communities. This funding will help establish Resilience Coalitions in each county represented in the Mid-Hudson RYJT.

In 2019, the focus was building the Resilience Coalitions in each county. All but two counties have operational Resilience Coalitions, and focus will shift to the assessment of the region and delivery of trainings to support a trauma-informed region.

### ***Mohawk Valley***

The Mohawk Valley team has worked for over five years to advance juvenile justice reform across its region. The team has achieved impressive results, including reducing both the number of juvenile arrests and the number of juvenile delinquency violations in their target counties. Still, there are significant, unmet service needs in each of these counties for youth at risk of involvement in the juvenile justice system. Through this grant, the team will increase diversion efforts and involved with the juvenile justice system or at risk of becoming involved in Herkimer, Fulton, Montgomery, Oneida, Otsego and Schoharie counties have access to evidence-based, individualized services to prevent further system involvement and ensure success in school, at home and in their communities. To accomplish this, team will launch three model initiatives shown to improve outcomes for youth across the region, including:

- *Detention Diversion Coordination*: Modeled on ICAN's highly successful Herkimer County Detention Diversion Coordination Program, launched in 2014, this component will serve youth, ages 7 to 17, who come into contact with the Oneida County Family Court for status offenses, violations of probation, misdemeanors or other low-level crimes. This program is an alternative that prevents deeper involvement in the juvenile justice system by providing customized community-based support to youth and their families. With support from this grant, Kids Oneida will hire and co-locate a detention diversion coordinator within the Oneida County Family Court to identify eligible cases, conduct needs and risk assessments, conduct intakes and enroll youth and families into the Detention Diversion Program. The coordinator will ensure youth are present for all future court appointments, refer youth and families to needed services and enroll them in Kids Oneida services available through an extensive provider network, as needed.
- *Knowledge Empowers You (KEY)*: Since 2015, the KEY program has operated at schools in Oneida and Herkimer counties with youth ages 7 to 17. KEY is an evidence-based program that empowers youth to make decisions that work for them. Facilitated by ICAN staff, interactive group sessions engage youth in discussions on the issues that are most relevant to their lives: relationships, self-esteem, goal setting, self-advocacy, preparing for work and college, internet safety, health and wellness, and personal finance, among others. With support from this grant, the KEY Program will be offered to youth on probation and to schools across all six target counties, with an emphasis on those counties that will be experiencing the KEY Program for the first time. Through this expansion, the team will be able to better meet the needs of at-risk youth in all Mohawk Valley communities, including those on probation and at risk of juvenile justice system involvement.
- *Service Provision for Individualized Needs (SPIN) Program*: The SPIN Program leverages individualized services to support the unique needs, challenges and strengths of youth ages 7 to

17 at risk of, and experiencing, juvenile justice system involvement. These services will center on peer-to-peer mentoring support through the Credible Messenger Model, which connects young people with mentors who are grounded in the experiences of justice-involved youth, to motivate youth to successfully challenge and transform destructive thinking, attitudes and actions. With support from this grant, the team will launch these services for youth in five target counties (Herkimer, Fulton, Montgomery, Otsego and Schoharie) and make them available to youth in Oneida County, as needed.

### ***North Country***

In an effort to build sustainable community capacity to address regionally identified, priority juvenile justice issues and enhance responses to at-risk and justice-involved youth, the North Country Regional Youth Justice Team surveyed each of the seven counties within the region to identify current needs. As a result of the survey, the grant funding was divided equally among each county and included:

- Franklin County's program to support foster care parents and caregivers through therapeutic non-violent crisis intervention. The plan will address the development and implementation of the Cornell University Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Families Training of Trainers. Community Education and Prevention programming ("Adulthood 101") will also be offered to the community, as well as local schools.
- Clinton County's cognitive Behavioral Therapy (Thinking for a Change) and life skills training to high risk youth involved in the juvenile justice system through the probation department (juvenile delinquents, adolescent offenders, and OCFS aftercare) and the Department of Social Services (PINS diversion/placement), who may also receive services through the Clinton County Mental Health and Addiction Services. Staff would be trained to deliver T4C in small group settings.
- Essex County's MindUp training program and curriculum for students in pre-K through eighth grade and their families, to help build resilience and provide positive, school-wide culture and climate. The county would also like to offer trauma-informed care training to law enforcement personnel through the expertise and support of trainer David Melnick, LICSW.
- Hamilton County's purchase of the MindUp Curriculum for Long Lake and Indian Lake school districts for children in pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, as well as school personnel.
- St. Lawrence County's Trauma Initiative, which includes partners from youth advocate programs, DSS and probation. With assistance from the University at Buffalo, trauma training will be offered to staff and the Trauma-Informed Organization Change Manual will be implemented, with technical assistance from the University to build and promote the initiative.
- Lewis County's Implement a Youth Peer Mediation Training Program, using the services of The Resolution Center of Jefferson and Lewis counties. As peer mediators, students in the team's programs will learn how to approach conflict constructively, practice active listening skills and model this kind behavior in their communities. School-based staff and school youth, ages 7 to 17, will be trained.
- Jefferson County's establishment of a peer mediation program through the assistance of the Resolution Center for students, school staff and partner agencies. Students within the program will learn how to approach conflict constructively, practice active listening skills and model this kind of behavior within the community. For school staff and youth, the peer mediation program

provides outlets for students to resolve everyday conflicts constructively, helping to create a culture where doing so is valued and expected.

### ***New York City***

The NYC RYJT is working to achieve a more gender-affirming system that consistently promotes and integrates the voices of young people into its policies and practices. A series of focus groups discovered a gap in training and understanding around gender responsiveness in placement settings, specifically related to girls. A more gender-affirming system will create an environment in which young people feel more supported, valued and empowered. It will also facilitate authentic collaboration with system leadership to shape ongoing system reform. The following initiatives will be used to support the RYJT's goal:

- *Storytelling Workshops*: The team will partner with Youth Communications, an organization dedicated to cultivating youth-authored stories and helping youth-serving adults engage in social and emotional learning to affect systems change. Through this partnership, youth will be able to authentically tell their stories and help each other navigate the system, while also helping reform policy and practice. The stories of youth will be memorialized and may be included in an anthology or a series of pamphlets for distribution.
- *Leadership Training for Youth*: Participating youth will be given the opportunity to embark on a leadership training journey, which will provide them to participate in facility-based Resident Councils, an ACS Youth Leadership Council and NYC Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee, among other opportunities. These youth will build on their leadership skills and serve as youth advocates for system reform through strategic sharing and participation on various committees. The youth will also be able to attend the annual Coalition for Juvenile Justice Youth Summit.
- *Co-Facilitated Training/Curriculum Building Opportunities*: Youth will be given the opportunity to exercise their leadership skills through co-facilitation of trainings with ACS staff, curriculum-building for future trainings and development of materials for youth, staff and families regarding best practices in the realm of gender responsiveness and juvenile justice. Once youth reach this stage, they may be able to be compensated via a stipend.

### ***Western New York***

The Western New York team engaged in a process allowing team members to submit grant proposals for initiatives that will address regionally-identified, priority juvenile justice issues and enhance responses to at-risk and justice-involved youth through training and implementation of evidence-based interventions. The team funded seven projects that fell within these four main priority areas:

- Enhance Trauma-Informed Services for Youth Intersecting with the Juvenile Justice System
  - Solution-Focused Trauma-Informed Care Training was provided to Erie and Niagara counties' probation officers who work with the juvenile justice population. The entire juvenile probation staff at the Erie County Probation Department and youth-serving agency partners in Niagara County attended a multi-day training on trauma-informed care, provided by the University at Buffalo. Approximately 40 youth-serving professionals were trained.
  - Professionals will be trained on best practices for trauma-informed care, with emphasis on the Southern Tier rural counties, through a trauma summit to train mental health providers in

Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) and strategies for developing and implementing a trauma-informed IEP/504 Plan.

- Expand and Enhance Restorative Practices
  - Restorative Practices training will be provided to three schools in Chautauqua County in a three-tiered approach.
  - A position will be created to oversee continued operations of the Erie County Family Court Pilot Program and to accelerate implementation of restorative practices throughout the region.
- Train Clinicians in a Youth with Sexual Behavior Problems Practice Model
  - Training in the Oklahoma University (OU) Adolescent Model for youth with sexual behavior problems will be provided for nine clinicians in the Western New York region, in a joint effort with the Finger Lakes RYJT.
- Reduce Racial and Ethnic Disparities
  - Develop a project primarily focused on Niagara County, in collaboration with OYJ, that will reduce racial and ethnic disparities among youth intersecting with the juvenile justice system.

PROJECTS APPROVED IN 2019	AWARD
My Brother's Keeper (MBK) Symposium	\$5,000
The Community Resolve Program	\$225,000
Trauma Champions Training Collaborative	\$20,000
Travel Costs: PYJ Regional Representatives	\$8,000