



Juvenile Justice
Advisory Group

Annual Report 2021

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**New York State Juvenile Justice Advisory Group
2021 Annual Report**

The U.S. Congress requires the Juvenile Justice Advisory Group (JJAG) to report to the Governor and Legislature annually. This report fulfills that requirement for 2021.

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I. Introduction and Background

The federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP) created the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to support state and local delinquency prevention efforts and juvenile justice system improvement; establish grant programs; and outline federal standards, known as core protections, for the care and custody of justice-involved youth.

Reauthorization of the JJDP in 2018 updated the core protections, restructured the prevention components of the law, expanded OJJDP research and evaluation purposes, and increased reporting requirements and accountability. These changes took effect Oct. 1, 2019, the beginning of the federal fiscal year.

New York State Executive Order 80 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 Executive Order also designates the state Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) as the 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. The 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 Division of Criminal Justice Services and the state Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) collaborate on certain juvenile justice initiatives. From 2017 through 2019, DCJS and OCFS worked with other state agencies to implement New York's Raise the Age law, which increased the age of criminal responsibility to 18 in two phases: 16-year-olds were no longer charged as adults (Oct. 1, 2018) and 17-year-olds, a year later (Oct. 1, 2019).

The JJAG annually oversees allocation of approximately \$2.1 million in federal grants, which fund delinquency prevention efforts, effective interventions for justice-involved youth, and improvements to youth justice systems. 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
- reducing disproportionate minority contact in the juvenile justice system.

II. Federal Mandates: Compliance and Monitoring

States receiving federal Title II formula grant funding must comply with those four core protections. DCJS contracts with the state Commission of Correction (the Commission or SCOC) to monitor and ensure

compliance with the following requirements, which are related to permissible methods of confinement for youth.

- **Deinstitutionalization of status offenders** prohibits placing a youth who has been determined to be a Person in Need of Supervision (PINS) 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 designated as a PINS 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.

The Commission has statutory authority to monitor police lockups, local county correctional facilities and state prisons. Existing New York 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. As a result, facilities statewide 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 must report certain incidents to the Commission, which reviews them and takes action as deemed appropriate. The state Office of Children and Family Services 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 they are in compliance with federal standards.

New York's strategy for reducing racial and ethnic disparities (R.E.D.) in the youth 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 partially support a full-time, statewide Race Equity 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 Race Equity Coordinator is responsible for monitoring compliance with strategies to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system across the state using a data-driven process to promote an overall equity initiative that supports training, programming, and changing policy and practice. 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 disparity when disproportionality is found and implementing strategies to reduce racial and ethnic disparities and increase equity.

To accomplish this work, the Race Equity Coordinator provides training and technical assistance to local and statewide partners, helping to identify policies and practices that may contribute to disparate treatment of youth of color in the system. Training includes both the historical perspective of race equity and the impact implicit bias has on decision making and everyday practice. In 2021, 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 and trained those

individuals about racial and ethnic disparities and the mind science of implicit bias, racial anxiety and stereotype threat.

- Provided technical assistance to the state's R.E.D. Advisory Committee to:
 - develop a bench card regarding issues of equity;
 - issue best practice guidance for data collection and assist with data collection issues related to race and ethnicity;
 - issue a best practice guidance document on the process of blinding decision-making points; and
 - create a cross-system, cross-agency glossary of equity-related terminology.
- Presented about racial and ethnic disparities at local and national conferences.
- Supported the Partnership for Youth Justice and other cross-agency groups working to address R.E.D.

III. Juvenile Justice Advisory Group Activities

The JJAG continued to conduct its quarterly meetings virtually in 2021. At its June meeting, the JJAG approved a new Strategic Action Plan and renewed its financial support of the New York State Youth Justice Institute, an initiative of DCJS, OCFS and the University at Albany. The JJAG also created a Youth Action Committee (YAC) to provide a space for youth members of the JJAG and funding to support exclusively youth-driven programs and opportunities.

A. Three-Year Plan for Juvenile Justice (2021 – 2023)

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. The JJAG approved its three-year plan for 2021 – 2023 and began implementation of its new priority areas.

PRIORITY AREA 1: Support efficient coordination, alignment and delivery of services that reflect the priorities of state agencies and the Partnership for Youth Justice throughout New York State: Highlight successful practices and encourage the use of new tools and practices to increase system effectiveness and measure outcomes.

PRIORITY AREA 2: Establish and implement youth justice policy priorities: Effectively and proactively serve all youth who encounter the youth justice system, while placing an enhanced focus on prevention and the following priority areas: racial and ethnic disparities; trauma, healing, and behavioral health; youth-centered services; partnerships with schools; police and community partnerships; and training and certification of youth-serving professionals.

PRIORITY AREA 3: Enhance positive youth, family and community impacts and outcomes: Partner with youth, families and communities in youth justice system work to improve outcomes and create meaningful connections for positive outcomes.

Trauma Champions Collaborative

The JJAG provided funding in 2019 that allowed professionals from multiple state agencies to attend a program designed to train them on the impact of trauma, adversity and re-traumatization on individuals, and how to integrate a trauma-informed approach into their work.

Professionals who attended the program, presented by the University at Buffalo Institute on Trauma & Trauma-Informed Care, formed the New York State Trauma Champions Collaborative to put what they learned into practice. In 2021, the Collaborative finalized a comprehensive set of resources to support state and local government and professional agencies in this effort in the following categories: Training and Technical Assistance Resources; Vicarious Trauma Resources; Policies and Procedures; Organizational Considerations; and Race Equity and Inclusion Terms and Definitions. The Collaborative also finalized a presentation detailing the importance of integrating a trauma-informed approach into state-level organizations and plans to roll it out to Executive level staff at participating agencies in 2022.

Race Equity Work

The Race Equity Coordinator developed the state's three-year plan to advance racial equity. As a part of the data-driven, outcome-oriented plan, New York State will work to decrease disproportionality of Black youth by 10 percent by increasing the use of diversion. New York State utilized the data from the last two years to identify this target. The state also identified the following youth justice policy and programming priorities for the next few years to achieve this goal, all of which lay the foundation for New York State's R.E.D. plan for 2021 – 2023:

- The enhancement of data capacity, collection and analysis to target interventions and measure outcomes.
- The development and implementation of New York State R.E.D. Advisory Committee Priorities aimed to provide guidance best practice on R.E.D reduction strategies.
- The provision of training and technical assistance for state and local youth justice systems and stakeholders.
- Monitoring the implementation of systems change through an equity lens to ensure that all youth benefit from reform efforts regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender.

The DCJS Office of Youth Justice, Center for Children's Law and Policy, and the Youth Justice Institute also launched the New York State Policy Equity Academy. Teams of youth justice practitioners from Albany, Monroe, Onondaga, Schenectady, and Westchester counties participated in asynchronous and synchronous trainings with the goal of building their capacities and skills so they can implement programs and policies to improve outcomes for youth of color in their communities. Upon completion of the virtual learning, teams received technical assistance from the Center for Children's Law and Policy, and Youth Justice Institute to develop and implement action plans to increase equity at adjustment (diversion) for Black youth. Plans will be implemented throughout the course of 2022. This initiative was funded by the JJAG, federal Delinquency Prevention Programming, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Race Equity Trainings

In April and October, Office of Youth Justice staff provided implicit bias and race equity training for OPCA's Fundamentals of Probation Practice training for new probation officers across the state. To advance the use of data to inform Probation practice, staff from the Office of Youth Justice, Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives, and the Office of Justice Research and Performance hosted a webinar providing an overview of juvenile justice system data by race/ethnicity for probation departments in counties outside of New York City. Attended by 70 probation directors and supervisors, this webinar highlighted new data available to departments, provided attendees with ideas for how to analyze and interpret the data and next steps for their departments to advance equity.

New York State Youth Justice Institute

The JJAG renewed its funding commitment to the New York State Youth Justice Institute (YJI), which is based at the University at Albany. The Institute also diversified its funding portfolio through a new agreement between the University and the state Office of Children and Family Services. This new funding supports several of the activities that follow, including the creation of a New York State Youth Advisory Board and evaluation of Stepping Stones, an alternative to placement/alternatives to detention program developed by Berkshire Farm Center and Services for Youth.

The University at Albany also provided funding to the Institute for faculty and other expert consultants engaged in Institute-related activities, tuition for four doctoral students working at the Institute, and student professional development, training and staff equipment. As a result of this combined funding, the Youth Justice Institute increased its research and technical assistance capacity by hiring a research associate, two additional doctoral student assistants, and a youth specialist.

Vision and Strategic Action Items

Institute Executive Director Dr. Giza Lopes has established [a vision for the Institute](#) to become the premier resource for evidence-informed policy and practice nationally and beyond by implementing the following strategies: serve as an information hub for stakeholders; cultivate and continually support practitioners' commitment to research-informed practices; develop a prolific and ever-growing network of research by investing in future generations of juvenile justice researchers and leveraging the University's academic expertise; foster and sustain synergy among stakeholders by bringing together government agencies, practitioners, and academics to advance and share knowledge, brainstorm innovations, and engage in agenda-setting; and leverage current public investment to attract external funding that will enable the YJI to grow.

In line with each of these strategies, the institute advanced the following activities:

Activity #1 – Providing opportunities for experiential education for undergraduate and graduate students

In 2021, 22 YJI Scholars – undergraduate and graduate students from several departments at the University at Albany – worked at the Institute and many of them took advantage of the opportunity for more than one academic term ([click here](#) for a complete list of YJI Scholars). YJI Scholars participate in high-level meetings with stakeholders and research projects and offer ideas for the future of youth justice and current issues of interest. In 2021, they:

- Assisted in designing, publishing and maintaining the Institute's website and two microsites;
- Produced a podcast episode on the intersection of schools and the justice system;
- Organized monthly and ad hoc events that attracted hundreds of registrants each and received thousands of asynchronous views on YouTube and Facebook;
- Created and published several interactive dashboards;
- Provided support for technical assistance projects;
- Contributed to ongoing qualitative research projects and associated presentations;
- Assisted in grant writing; and
- Engaged in promoting the Institute's work through social media.

YJI Scholars also are expected to fulfill the requirements of a curriculum designed to support their development as future youth justice professionals. The curriculum trains them to participate in a variety of

YJI research, provides opportunities for professional development, and introduces Scholars to broader youth justice research and practice. For example, Scholars systematically read academic articles and book chapters, attend webinars, and discuss their thoughts on youth justice topics both at meetings and on our shared YJI online board. To date, the Institute has offered dozens of internship opportunities and its graduates have entered the work force in myriad roles, including at police departments, nonprofit organizations, and local government initiatives. Others have been admitted to law school and to graduate programs.

Activity #2 – New York State Youth Advisory Board

At the request of the Office of Children and Family Services, the Institute developed a foundational concept and structure for a New York State Youth Justice Youth Advisory Board (YAB). Through funding from the agency, the Institute hired a youth specialist to complete the planning process and launch the YAB in 2022.

Training

Activity #3 – YJI Lunch & Learn Webinar Series

March 2021 marked the first anniversary of the YJI's "Lunch & Learn," a webinar series featuring cutting-edge research experts whose work can benefit youth justice practitioners; these webinars are primarily funded by the JJAG. As of December 2021, 19 webinars had more than 4,200 registrations, as well as asynchronous viewings in Facebook and other social media channels (click [here](#) to access all of the webinars to date). Webinars have explored diverse themes, such as restorative justice practices, the role of familial supervision in the context of juvenile probation, and system reforms for emerging adults. Participants include academics, youth justice practitioners and educators from across the globe, as well as local, state, and federal employees. Surveys on participants' experience are overwhelmingly positive.

Activity #4 – COVID-19 and Youth Forum: Beyond 2020, the Next Normal

As a follow up to a virtual convening in 2020 designed to support youth justice practitioners' and researchers' understanding of the COVID-19 pandemic's far-reaching impact on youth and families, the YJI hosted a second forum in 2021. "COVID-19 and Youth Forum: Beyond 2020, the Next Normal," explored the courts, education, and trauma and healing, with a focus on historically marginalized populations. The three-day event, which featured keynote presentations by New York State Chief Judge Janet DiFiore, Dr. Isaiah Pickens and Professor Gary Younge, had more than 1,500 participants from throughout New York State, the nation and world. The COVID-19 and Youth microsite features the full content of both forums, including recordings of the panels and keynote addresses, a highlights video, and the two published conference briefs. The Institute plans to build upon this work by publishing two expert briefs on the impact of the pandemic on youth and its practitioners. To date, this work has been funded by University at Albany with support from the JJAG.

Activity #5 – "Social Justice for Our Youth" with Dr. Monique Morris followed by "A Conversation with Dr. Monique Morris"

In partnership with the New York State Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children, the Institute hosted two virtual sessions on "Social Justice for Our Youth," presented by Dr. Monique Morris. Dr. Morris is an award-winning author and social justice scholar with three decades of experience in the areas of education, civil rights, and juvenile and social justice. She is also the executive producer and co-writer for the critically acclaimed documentary *PUSHOUT: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools*. The first webinar was open to the public and attracted nearly 750 registrations. The second session, by invitation only, was designed as a conversation between the presenter and stakeholders from DCJS, OCFS, SUNY,

the Unified Court System and other relevant state agencies. A recording of the first session of this event can be found on the YJI's [website](#). Funding for this initiative came primarily from the Commission, with YJI staff support funded by the JJAG.

Activity #6 – New York State Policy Equity Academy

The Policy Equity Academy represents a new training, technical assistance, and skill-building opportunity for youth justice professionals throughout New York State. It is designed to support local teams in their efforts to implement policies and reforms that target areas of racial and ethnic disparity in the youth justice system. This Academy's first project targeted disparity at the adjustment (diversion) system point, working with youth justice professionals from five counties: Albany, Monroe, Onondaga, Schenectady, and Westchester.

To support this training, the YJI developed a dedicated learning management system, which houses curriculum resources that can be accessed virtually by the Academy participants. Upon completion of course work in early 2022, teams will receive a YJI Certificate followed by up to 18 months of technical assistance, and up to \$50,000 each to implement their reform plans. Technical assistance meetings will support the teams as they implement the R.E.D. work plans developed during the training. Learn more about the PEA [here](#).

Activity #7 – Centering Racial Equity in Research

Funded primarily by the University at Albany, the Institute developed a workshop to allow selected researchers from state agencies and academia to learn how to effectively incorporate a racial equity lens at all stages of their research, from design to data collection and analysis. This training represents key support for state and regional partners in their efforts to reduce R.E.D. in their systems. Dr. Kristine Andrews, Co-Founder and Senior Director at Ideas to Impact and a Visiting Distinguished Fellow at Child Trends, and Dr. Victor St. John, Assistant Professor at Saint Louis University within the College of Public Health and Social Justice, presented the workshop in early 2022. Both are nationally recognized scholars who focus on centering racial equity in research planning and implementation.

Research

Activity #8 – Participatory Action Research with BIPOC Girls in New York State

In Summer 2021, the YJI partnered with Dr. Sarah Mountz from the University at Albany School of Social Welfare and Dr. LeConté Dill from the Michigan State University Department of African American and African Studies to initiate a participatory action research project on the self-described needs and experiences of BIPOC girls across New York State. The study is designed to deepen the understanding of the experiences of girls, including those who identify as femmes, non-binary, and gender nonconforming, in New York's criminal justice, juvenile justice, and child welfare systems, as well as factors contributing to the participants' healing and resiliency. The project is currently awaiting Institutional Review Board approval and so far, has been funded primarily by University at Albany and the JJAG.

Activity #9 – Stepping Stones Projects (logic model, mock dashboard, current research efforts)

The YJI worked with Berkshire Farms staff for seven months in 2020 and 2021 to develop a program logic model for its Stepping Stones program. As part of the logic model development process, YJI staff read and compiled information from multiple Stepping Stones sites across the state and created a draft dashboard to show Berkshire Farms the data tracking ability made possible through such a mechanism. The Institute and Berkshire Farms staff are now planning a process evaluation; this work is primarily funded by OCFS.

Activity #10 – SNUG Collaborative Study

The Institute, in partnership with University at Albany Criminal Justice Assistant Professor Dr. David Hureau, worked with the Office of Youth Justice, and Office of Justice Research and Performance to develop an evaluation of DCJS-supported SNUG Street Outreach Programs. The program operates in 12 communities with high rates of gun violence. The evaluation will include an outreach survey for SNUG workers and also an evaluability assessment of the program in the second half of 2022.

Technical Assistance

Activity #11 – Technical Assistance and Research Assistance that are Responsive to Partners' Needs

One of the chief objectives of the YJI is to provide technical assistance to its partner agencies and localities in New York State. To facilitate, systematize, and track its technical assistance requests, the YJI launched an online Technical Assistance Request Portal in 2021, accessible via the YJI website.

The portal allows stakeholders to request specific assistance and describe their needs, timeframes, point of contact, and other relevant information. All requests are reviewed by the YJI's Associate for Training and Technical Assistance and Executive Director. Examples of technical assistance and research activities that are responsive to our partners' needs include:

- *RYJT Survey* – In collaboration with the Office of Youth Justice, the Institute created and disseminated an electronic Qualtrics survey to members of Regional Youth Justice Teams (RYJTs) across the state to gauge their feelings on the RYJT's functioning and any additional needed support. Individuals from all nine RYJTs participated in the survey, which had a response rate of 18.47 percent, and the YJI aggregated and reported the results to Office of Youth Justice.
- *Planning of Youth Summit* – The Central New York RYJT requested support with planning a youth summit to bring together youth, community and law enforcement voices. The YJI participated in the planning subcommittee's initial meetings and offered advisement on youth engagement best practices and planning points.
- *Electronic Monitoring Literature Review* – At the request of the Partnership for Youth Justice, YJI staff and a YJI-appointed Bridges scholar conducted a literature review on electronic monitoring practices and policies in states that have similar governance structures to New York. The YJI submitted and presented the final draft of the review to the Electronic Monitoring workgroup in June 2021.
- *Mentoring Dashboard Development* – The YJI began collaborating with the Office of Youth Justice to develop a statewide mentoring dashboard that will allow families, service providers, and justice stakeholders to find and connect with mentoring services for youth.
- *Elmcrest Children's Center Grant TA* – The Center requested technical assistance support as it developed a proposal for a federal grant to expand their services for youth with sexual behavior problems. The YJI advised Elmcrest on the federal grant application process, provided sample materials, provided research and citations for the program narrative section, advised Elmcrest on data collection and storage options should their proposal be successful, and read multiple drafts of the proposal.
- The YJI assisted in the organization of the 19th annual lecture hosted by the Hindelang Criminal Justice Research Center within the University at Albany School of Criminal Justice. The speaker for this event was Dr. Cassia Spohn, Foundation Professor and director of the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Arizona State University. YJI Scholars provided technical assistance and

support for all aspects of the event. Funding for this initiative came primarily from the Hindelang Center, with YJI staff support funded by the JJAG.

- The Institute also engaged in planning work in these areas:
 - Providing support on the Office of Youth Justice’s work to establish youth and law enforcement trust building dialogues in three communities in New York State.
 - Developing a 10-page brief on the successful implementation of the Safe Harbour program, which will be completed in 2022 with funding from OCFS.
 - Discussing the possibility of developing a youth-focused version of the Outcomes for Human Trafficking Survivors screening tool. These conversations, with researchers at the Rochester Institute of Technology, are at the request of OCFS.
 - Identifying needs and gaps in the ability of New York’s localities to collect, access, analyze and use juvenile justice data in their decision-making process. YJI is currently implementing a three-phase process to gather information from the counties on their needs and assets in this area, which will be supported primarily by OCFS’ funds.

Activity #12 – JJAG Technical Assistance

At the completion of the JJAG Strategic Action Plan report, the Institute collaborated with Office of Youth Justice staff to develop a survey to gauge the JJAG members’ priority areas among the work described in the plan. At the request of OYJ staff, the YJI’s Associate for Training and Technical Assistance reviewed the 17 interviews completed as part of the JJAG Strategic planning process to identify JJAG members’ (and others) recommendations for specific programs, program models, and key individual stakeholders focused on reducing inequities in New York. The YJI submitted a de-identified compilation of this information to JJAG leadership and OYJ staff.

Activity #13 – Repository of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices

In alignment with its mission, the YJI has developed a cutting-edge tool to support practitioners seeking to identify evidence-based youth justice and family-focused programs and practices. The Evidence-Based Programs and Practices in Youth Justice Clearinghouse is an interactive dashboard that was created with the continued support and input of various youth justice stakeholders, including researchers, policymakers, and practitioners who directly serve youth. The Clearinghouse was slated to launch in early 2022 and focuses on what evidenced-based practices (EBPs) are, their utility, the important role they play in youth justice practice, tools that can be used to assess EBPs, and how those tools may be useful in research-practice partnerships.

Activity #14 – DCJS Office of Youth Justice Strategic Planning

At the request of the Office of Youth Justice leadership, the YJI facilitated multiple strategy analysis sessions for that office. The YJI initially engaged with OYJ’s leadership team to develop a description of current projects and key partners, a review and reassessment of the strategies adopted in 2016, a vision for the future directions of these strategies and products, and a revision of the office’s mission, vision and key principles. The YJI also facilitated a project analysis with the Regional Youth Justice Team liaisons.

Information Hub and Dissemination

Activity #15 – Website Maintenance and Microsites

The YJI routinely updates its website, which continues to draw audience from New York, as well as national and international locations. The Institute also maintains a COVID-19 and Youth microsite and in 2021, launched a Racial Equity & Youth Justice microsite that offers youth and community justice partners an

array of relevant national and YJI-developed racial justice resources and research. The guides, toolkits, webinars, and scholarly articles, among other materials, are designed to provide concrete supports that empower, instruct, motivate and inspire our work to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in youth justice systems. The Institute also is developing a Gender & Youth Justice microsite, which is expected to be launched in 2022.

Activity #16 – Social Media and Newsletters

The YJI has a robust presence on social media: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Each week, the Institute publishes “Did you know?” posts on all social media platforms, as well as other relevant information. The number of followers in each of these platforms continues to grow and amplifies the presence and brand of the YJI in the state and beyond. In addition, the Institute routinely publishes a newsletter, “On the Same Page,” and the Institute’s listserv accounts for more than 2,600 subscribers and on average about 30 percent of readers engage with the contents of the newsletter each month. The YJI newsletters feature relevant research, news, and evidence-based information to this growing audience. Several of its issues include research briefs prepared by YJI Scholars on diverse youth justice topics.

Activity #17 – Dashboards

The Institute’s website supports the creation and publication of dashboards that display data and other relevant information for the public in a way that is accessible, easy to understand, and interactive. With funding provided by University at Albany, staff and students continue to be trained on the development of these dashboards using Tableau software, and their impact and usefulness can be measured by the high public engagement with each dashboard.

Activity #18 – “Let’s Talk About Youth Justice” Podcast Series

In line with the YJI’s commitment to making research findings available to a wider audience, YJI Scholars planned and produced a podcast on the school-to-prison pipeline that was slated to be available in Spring 2022.

Outreach Efforts and External Funding

Activity #19 – Committees and Local/National Networking

Institute staff routinely participate in a variety of state committees and initiatives, including the Partnership for Youth Justice and several of its subcommittees, the New York State Racial and Ethnic Disparities Advisory Committee, Youth and Young Adults with Developmental Disabilities Committee, and the Trauma Champions Collaborative, among others. Additionally, the Executive Director and Associate for Technical Assistance routinely identify and engage with relevant national and local stakeholders to introduce them to the work of the Institute and look for collaborative opportunities. YJI Staff also attended the national American Society of Criminology meeting in Fall 2021 and the Institute’s Executive Director was selected as a [Fellow of SUNY-wide Hispanic Leadership Institute](#). Finally, YJI staff have submitted proposals to present their work in 2022 at the National Conference on Juvenile Justice and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

Activity #20 – External Funding

The YJI aims to seek funding that will help it grow and move toward self-sustainability. A newly hired Research Associate increases the Institute’s research capacity and better positions the YJI to be competitive. The Institute also has identified a vendor to support its funding proposal development

specifically focused on its youth violence prevention research, and also responded to multiple federal and private opportunities in 2021.

Community Resolve Program

The Community Resolve Program (CRP) is a collaboration among the New York City Department of Probation, the state Unified Court System and four nonprofit Community Dispute Resolution Centers in the New York City area. This program 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 they have caused. The target population for the program are youth facing assault or robbery charges whose cases are suitable for adjustment. The program engages those youth and the individuals affected by their behavior, including those they harmed, as well as the youth's family and circle of support.

Probation and the Community Dispute Resolution Centers collaboratively offer services that

- help youth improve their behavior and repair harm;
- assist complainants and others affected by the incident; and
- provide an opportunity for direct interaction between the youth and complainants.

This approach is designed to meet the needs of victims of crime and the community, prevent further involvement with the criminal justice system, and assist participating youth in gaining a greater understanding of the harm they have caused. In 2021, the program staff conducted 83 adjustment services circles for 83 youth and victims and conducted 22 hours of conflict coaching. On average, youths participate in the program for 30 days.

Georgetown Certificate Program – New York State Girl-Centered Practice

The JJAG approved funding in 2018 that allowed DCJS to solicit localities interested in sending teams to Georgetown University's Center for Juvenile Justice Reform's certificate programs aimed at enhancing skills and competencies around youth justice. Each participating team then developed a capstone project that would demonstrate successful implementation of what was learned, with attention to measurable outcomes.

In September 2021, in conjunction with the Delores Barr Weaver Policy Center, Georgetown piloted the New York Girl-Centered Practice Virtual Certificate program. This certificate program was designed to help New York localities with their efforts to best meet the needs of girls in a collaborative, multi-system manner. As a part of its commitment to advance the intersectionality between race and gender equity, the DCJS identified the following priority areas related to girls in the youth justice system:

- Increase skills and local capacity for providing services to girls in the youth justice system;
- Increase available funding, programming, and services available to girls across the state;
- Embed policies, procedures, and programming into existing work to account for intersectionality between race and gender; and
- Partner with girls who have lived experience to inform policy recommendations and changes.

The intensive program gave teams and individuals the tools and knowledge to apply a girl-centered approach to their practices, policies and programs. Understanding the necessity of a shift from reactive to proactive responses and by including reflective practice and a strengths-based approach, the program not

only focused on the challenges faced by girls in child-serving systems but also illuminated the strengths and protective factors common to this population. The training also highlighted effective policy and practice reforms that take a holistic approach to addressing the needs of system-involved girls, while aiming to also prevent unnecessary involvement in the juvenile justice system.

Professionals from Suffolk and Nassau counties, SNUG Street Outreach Programs, the state Education Department, Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children, the Youth Justice Institute, Office of Youth Justice, and Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives participated. Teams are working to submit their capstone proposals for feedback and state agency partners will begin meeting to operationalize what was learned in their individual agencies. Teams are being provided with ongoing technical assistance from Georgetown and a subsequent convening is planned for early 2022.

B. Support for Regional Youth Justice Teams

Nine Regional Youth Justice Teams (RYJT) continued to foster cross-county, multi-disciplinary approaches to juvenile justice program and policy work. Office of Youth Justice staff serve as liaisons between the teams and the state, advising the teams of state-level trends and initiatives and communicating local concerns and accomplishment to state agencies and other state-level policymakers.

In 2021, DCJS continued assisting the teams in developing and implementing plans for funding the following projects, as well as funding for an outside entity to assist with the grant requirements:

Capital Region

The Capital Region team's work focused on reducing racial and ethnic disparities, reintegration and trauma-informed care.

- Training modules and a training curriculum on the reintegration continuum framework were completed and implemented in Rensselaer County. Youth justice professionals from across several disciplines convened to provide practical feedback on its implementation. A manual to document this process, including the training, will be near complete at the end of 2021 with the intent of other counties participating in this process.
- A request for proposals (RFP) was released and awarded to Northern Rivers to assist in Implicit Bias training for local probation and social services staff.
- The Trauma Champions Collaborative completed training and technical assistance through the Institute on Trauma and Trauma Informed Care (ITTIC) and plans to implement a Wellness Matters series that is designed to help staff incorporate resiliency, wellness, and self-care techniques into their daily routines to reduce the symptoms and impact of secondary and primary traumatic stress and speed the recovery and healing process.

Central New York

A team of 17 juvenile justice leaders from seven Central New York counties completed its Results Based Leadership (RBL) project, which was designed to support the vision that all youth involved in the region's juvenile justice system can learn from their mistakes and stay in their communities safely. The training was broken down into two main sections:

- Bringing Together Stakeholders that are in Alignment to Make Positive Change – Theory of Aligned Contribution: Understanding the importance of having a diverse group of stakeholders working

together toward a common result and how to work toward getting people into high action and high alignment with the work.

- Creation of a County Results Action Plan:
 - System Population Statement: What is the vision of youth in your system being successful?
 - Develop Indicators: What data will you use to track to see if you are successful?
 - Developing Targets: Where do you want to be, by when? Create urgency in your work!
 - Factor Analysis and the Story Behind the Data: Engaging community and system stakeholders to review the data and understand the key factors as to why it looks the way it does.
 - Getting to Root Causes: Digging deeper into the key factors and getting to the root of the issue that needs to be addressed to change the outcome/date.
 - Developing Proposed Strategies: What strategies and ideas can address the root causes that have been identified to help 'Turn the Curve' and developing effective performance measures to track progress.
 - Understanding the Resources and Supports You Need to Make the Strategies Work: Make sure that you have a plan and know what steps are necessary to effectively implement it.

These plans will be implemented in 2022 with the use of "spot grant" funding.

Finger Lakes

The Finger Lakes team continued its work with Coordinated Care Services Inc. (CCSI) to implement and expand trauma-informed practices in the region. This work assisted stakeholders in developing a common understanding and language, fostered growth and collaboration, and supported implementation practices. CCSI also assisted teams in using the TRUST tool to identify areas of need and options for addressing them. This work will continue in 2022 and will incorporate the tenets of Healing Centered Engagement.

Work also continued on the Youth with Sexual Behavior Problems initiative, in partnership with the Western New York Regional Youth Justice Team. Training for senior leaders and clinicians in Oklahoma University's Problematic Sexual Behavior Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy was conducted over several months and participating clinicians are expected to attain fidelity in the model in 2022. The evidence-based model is designed to treat youth and their families in a community-based setting and has demonstrated a 3 percent reoffending rate among successful program graduates.

Long Island

As a short-term effort, the Long Island team conducted an Interactive Journaling Train-the-Trainer training in Nassau County, providing the probation department and community-based organizations with a helpful tool in engaging youth that they serve. The team also sought to promote prosocial activities, as they found that to be a large gap in resources available to youth, but COVID-19 limited their ability to offer community-based events with interested partners. The focus shifted to providing an alternative to youth that remained in the local detention facility, with the team partnering with Suffolk County Community College to create the virtual Suffolk Theatre Arts Program. Youth were given writing prompts and activities by a theater professor and explored the power of telling their stories through monologues. The initial program culminated in a performance of their monologues and screening of an illustrated, time-lapsed video, "Words from my Soul," for key county stakeholders; the video is posted to the New York State Youth Justice Institute (YJI) website and the team hopes to replicate this program in 2022 year.

Mid-Hudson

The Mid-Hudson team continued its efforts to move the region toward being trauma-informed by using the Attitudes Related to Trauma Informed Care survey instrument to assess organization and employee attitudes toward trauma-informed care and determine readiness and training needs. Responses received from the anonymous survey of employees of county departments is being reviewed and will be shared with stakeholders in each county.

With the ongoing and multi-layered impact of COVID-19, Mid-Hudson continues to build Resilience Coalitions, which help communities educate themselves about the impact of trauma, brainstorm solutions to build resiliency and advocate for the needs of their community. These coalitions are modeled after a successful initiative in Westchester County that engaged individuals on the topic of trauma and resilience through the screening of the movie “Resilience,” conducting Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) surveys and discussing the complexities of trauma. In addition to Westchester, coalitions are operational in Orange and Rockland counties with the four remaining counties set to launch in 2022.

Mohawk Valley

The team completed programming related to diversion efforts and ensured that justice-involved and at-risk youth have access to evidence-based, individualized services to prevent further system involvement and ensure their success in school, at home, and in the community. Three model initiatives shown to improve outcomes for youth: detention diversion coordination, Knowledge Empowers You (KEY), and Service Provision for Individualized Needs (SPIN) Program served youth from the ages of seven to 17. The regional youth justice team continued to meet throughout the year.

North County

The following counties received grant funding to support the following:

- *Franklin*: Implementing the Cornell University Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) for Families Training of Trainers and community education and prevention programming to support foster care parents and caregivers. An evaluation tool for the four-day training was created for this project and will be used in subsequent trainings in 2022.
- *Clinton*: Training youth and families in the Incredible Years curriculum to provide access to parenting programs and independent living skills. The Guiding Good Choices curriculum will be offered in 2022 further increase access and develop skills.
- *Essex*: Offering the MindUp training program and curriculum for school staff, parents, and children in pre-K through eighth grade; this training is intended to build resilience and provide positive school-wide culture and climate.
- *St. Lawrence*: Continuing the Trauma-Informed Care Initiative, which includes partners from Youth Advocate Programs, Department of Social Services, and Probation. The initiative will implement the Trauma-Informed Organization Change Manual and continue Core Champion meetings.
- *Jefferson and Lewis*: Implementing a Restorative Practices Training program through The Resolution Center of Jefferson and Lewis Counties. The program engages youth ranging in age from 7 to 17, as well as school staff and partner agencies, and teaches youth how to approach conflict constructively, practice active listening skills and model this behavior within the community. A second training curriculum on trauma-informed care, provided by Rubenzahl, Knudsen & Associates, will support front-facing paraprofessionals. Three training sessions took place where 25

staff were able to participate in the training. Jefferson County also will support a traveling teen center allowing high school students to engage in STEM activities, cooking lessons, and a wellness series.

New York City (Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee)

As COVID-19 gripped New York City, the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) saw a significant drop in the number of youths being arrested and admitted to its secure detention facilities. There were steep declines in detention admissions for most offenses, with the exception of family offenses, which dramatically increased. While the admission of youth to secure detention on charges stemming from family conflict was not new, the increase during a public health crisis and in the midst of a nationwide focus on racial justice issues brought this issue to the forefront of the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (JJAC) for resolution. The fact that all families struggle, but it is almost exclusively Black and Brown families in NYC that experience the arrest and admission to detention of a child in response to family conflict, also elevated the critical importance of this issue in the eyes of the JJAC. Citywide strategies for diverting youth from admission to secure detention, and the design of non-law enforcement-led responses to family conflict case were lacking.

To build upon efforts by the Department of Probation and the Law Department to divert prosecution and reduce formal court appearances for these youth, JJAC leadership moved forward with a multi-stage process aimed at:

- Avoiding the exposure of youth to secure detention in the wake of family conflicts;
- Consistently engaging families as quickly as possible with local supports and services delivered by neighborhood-based agencies in their home community; and
- Partnering with all relevant City agencies and community partners to create safe alternatives to the traditional law enforcement-led approach to handling these cases.

At the programmatic level, JJAC leadership has enlisted the support of Community Partnership Programs (CPPs) operating in neighborhoods nearest the NYPD precincts experiencing the greatest number of family offense calls. The primary goal is to promptly connect neighborhood-based support services with youth and families involved in these cases.

The CPPs are networks of small, neighborhood-based service providers working both together and separately to meet the wide range of needs among families within the communities they serve. While these networks have tended to focus on child welfare-related services, they seek to expand their scope of service to include engagement with youth and families within the jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system, many of whom are dually involved in both systems. The goal is for CPPs to reach out directly to families within 24 hours of an arrest to offer whatever support might be needed to help alleviate the pressures that may have contributed to the event that led to the police call. This outreach is intended to achieve several objectives:

- Interrupt the cycle of family violence that is often involved in such cases when immediate family intervention is not available;
- Make families immediately aware of relevant and accessible resources in their community that can be of assistance; and
- Familiarize families with an established support network in their community that could be a resource in the future to avoid a repeat of the events that lead to police being called.

At the policy level, the JJAC is working with the Vera Institute of Justice to help coordinate two citywide forums in 2022 focusing on family conflict cases.

The first forum will focus on current practice: how we currently respond to and treat the youth and families once a domestic disturbance call is received by NYPD; identifying where these cases are most prevalent; learning what the research says about what precipitates these family conflict events; defining who these youth and families are; and exploring what efforts are currently in place to support these youth/families, etc.

The second will include a broader audience with representation from advocacy groups, families/youth, and others who can help shape a permanent, long-term solution for addressing the immediate and continuing needs of these youth and families, avoiding admission of youth of secure detention in these cases, and shifting away from law enforcement-led responses when neighborhood-based interventions can produce the desired result. The goal of these forums is the creation of a roadmap for the JJAC and all its partners to follow to create a more effective approach to responding to the needs of youth and families in the midst of crisis.

Western New York

The Western New York team hosted a virtual training on the Racial Equity Impact Analysis Tool (REIAT) attended by 30 participants from a variety of agencies from all five counties, including social services, probation, community-based nonprofits, Family Court, and Legal Aid. To sustain the initiative, two REIAT Coaches received additional training to provide ongoing, embedded support to the organizations that participated in the initial training.

The Western New York team also expanded upon its restorative practices work with the goal of replicating the Erie County Family Court Restorative Practices Program in Family Courts in Niagara, Chautauqua, Cattaraugus and Allegany counties. Capacity has been established in Chautauqua and Allegany counties, and in Erie County, the scope of the Family Court Restorative Practices Program has been expanded and now collaborates with the Erie County District Attorney’s Office on cases involving youth facing an unauthorized use of a motor vehicle charge.

Work also continued on the Youth with Sexual Behavior Problems initiative, in partnership with the Finger Lakes Regional Youth Justice Team. Training for senior leaders and clinicians in Oklahoma University’s Problematic Sexual Behavior Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy was conducted over several months and participating clinicians are expected to attain fidelity in the model in 2022. The evidence-based model is designed to treat youth and their families in a community-based setting and has demonstrated a 3 percent reoffending rate among successful program graduates.

The JJAG approved the following grant awards in 2021:

PROJECTS	AWARD
Youth Action Committee	\$75,000
Youth Justice Institute Project Extension	\$1,900,000