

PROPOSAL #1

New York State Juvenile Justice Advisory Group

Recommendation for Action: March 8, 2022

Mentoring Partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters

Proposed Grant Recipient: Big Brothers Big Sisters of Westchester and Putnam counties, Erie, Niagara and the Southern Tier, and Southern Adirondacks

Proposed Funding Amount: \$50,000 for each of the three sites listed above (total \$150,000)

Overview:

This grant would be used to support mentoring programs across New York State by partnering with three Big Brothers Big Sisters sites. By choosing sites with model programs and excellent outcomes, it is the intention to use the geographic spread and evidence-based programming to impact youth across the state. This project directly relates to the JJAG's strategy, goals, and action steps outlined in the 2021 NYS JJAG Strategic Plan by addressing the following areas:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

These sites are recognized by the federal government as a partner in mentoring, serve at-risk and system involved youth (justice and child welfare) while also wrapping services around siblings and families. Participants in the program are often medicaid eligible, youth of color, and experiencing complex, violent and traumatic histories. Early intervention and long term relationship strategies are critical in assisting these youth and families. Big Brothers Big Sisters is able to facilitate thoughtful matches (based on interest, need, career aspirations, etc.), conduct home visits, participate in virtual and community based activities, and ensure monthly contact (minimally) to build on relationships in a healthy and productive way. Average match lengths are twenty-eight months with a retention rate of eighty-four percent.

Anticipated deliverables include:

1. Increased number of mentor/mentee matches at each of the three sites including virtual and/or community-based activities
2. Plans for wraparound services and treatment strategies that can inform additional funding and programming of mentoring projects.

Justification:

Both the OJJDP Title II application and JJAG strategic plan speak to the need for prevention services, building community trust, addressing trauma, healing, and behavioral health with a focus on reducing racial and ethnic disparities. This project will help build capacity for mentoring programs across New York State while utilizing unspent funds set to expire in September 2022 and addressing each of the program focuses

listed above. If this project is successful, the Office of Youth Justice would look to support other mentoring programs across the state as it builds New York State's mentoring profile and commitment to evidence-based programming.

Recommended Action:

Authorize \$150,000 (\$50,000 each) for DCJS support to support three Big Brothers Big Sisters sites across New York State to accomplish the objectives outlined above.