Bringing people together to decide what aspects of juvenile justice in Douglas County need to change and how that change will happen.

Operation Youth Success
Douglas County, Nebraska
Greetings:

I am pleased to submit the Operation Youth Success Year in Review for calendar year 2017. As we reflect upon another year of service we celebrate the steadfast efforts of the youth-serving professionals who are the champions of juvenile justice system reform in Douglas County. Of particular importance is our relationship with the members of this effort. Without your collaborative partnership, the progress outlined herein would be impossible. As we develop this annual review, we highlight the initiative’s greatest stories of the year and combine them with a vision for what is to come.

Operation Youth Success continues to convene community stakeholders under a shared vision and goal:

Across Douglas County, our vision is a comprehensive, coordinated, and community-wide approach to juvenile services that eliminates the need for youth involvement with our justice system while maintaining public safety. For all youth who do enter our justice system, our goals are to provide effective, compassionate and individualized support that empowers youth and their families to succeed and to build an environment of mutual trust and accountability.

The current political climate for comprehensive reform of the local juvenile justice system is promising. The path to change is complex as we strive to balance the concepts of justice, rehabilitation, and public safety. As Bart Lubow of the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative at the Annie E. Casey Foundation once remarked, “There is much more to do if we are to develop systems that treat children who are in trouble with the law the way we would want our own children treated.” We support holistic, inclusive justice policies and practices that provide young people with the skills and support services they need to thrive. We aim to significantly reduce inequalities in access, participation, and engagement.

The OYS initiative has experienced progress with regard to process change, collaboration, and capacity building. Stakeholders are energized around professional development opportunities and system-reform efforts which emphasize a rehabilitative, culturally competent, trauma-informed, and developmentally appropriate juvenile justice system. We maintain a focus on better outcomes for all youth, particularly youth of color who are disproportionately represented in the juvenile justice system. With the continued support of individuals, community partners, and government agencies we believe the change we seek is possible. The future of the juvenile justice is found in the decisions we make today. We believe those decisions should be focused on the best interest of young people and their families. We welcome the community to join with us.

Very respectfully,

Janee Pannkuk

Janee Pannkuk

Operation Youth Success
**Justice Maze**

*Even in the most difficult mazes, there’s a way to get in and out. But the juvenile justice system is designed without enough paths that come out of the maze. A lot of young people get trapped on a path that goes straight to prison and has no way out. For the system to meet our communities’ needs, other routes must be made available, such as paths to mental health services, addiction services, or programs that allow youth to serve sentences in alternative settings. We need to redesign the justice maze so that fewer young people get caught up in it, and so that once youth inside are ready to exit, they can leave it behind, join our communities, and begin productive adult lives.*

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Progress toward Project Goals:

GOAL: Provide quality services in a cost-effective manner:

- Operation Youth Success has established a multi-level process for assessing community needs based on data and strives to build collaborations which allow for expanding and/or enhancing services to meet those needs.

- Operation Youth Success (OYS) partners with county departments to facilitate the process of administering the Douglas County Community-based Juvenile Services Aid funding. Continuous quality improvement of processes, oversight and compliance with Nebraska Crime Commission rules and regulations are in the forefront. Areas of focus related to administration of the fund are establishing a uniform application process, a transparent review and selection process, and quarterly monitoring of budgets. In formalizing these processes, staff ensure funds target the programs and services which most strictly align with the strategic priorities of the Douglas County Comprehensive Juvenile Services Plan “community plan” as well as the action items of OYS work groups and Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiatives (JDAI) subcommittees.

Across Douglas County, our vision is a comprehensive, coordinated, and community-wide approach to juvenile services that eliminates the need for youth involvement with our justice system while maintaining public safety.

For all youth who do enter our justice system, our goals are to provide effective, compassionate, and individualized support that empowers youth and their families to succeed and to build an environment of mutual trust and accountability.

GOAL: Develop the backbone organization:

- Operation Youth Success hired Debora Faga as Administrative Assistant in January, 2017.
- Operation Youth Success hired Karla Dush as Program Coordinator in September, 2017.
- The OYS Data Analyst hired in December, 2016 resigned her position in August, 2017 to pursue her Ph. D at the University of Nebraska, Omaha. The hiring process for a new Data Analyst concluded in December, 2017 and the new analyst, Catherine Rivier was hired in January, 2018.
- In addition to OYS staff, the backbone receives development support from a developmental evaluation team from TerraLuna Collaborative. The DE Team supports the backbone’s work by:
  - Tracking the degree to which OYS has/is adhering to its vision and goals;
  - Gaging the degree to which the “Five conditions of Collective Impact” have/are occurring within OYS and;
  - Assessing “mindset shifts” within the Steering Committee that have/are occurring to support change across the system;
- The Operation Youth Success backbone:
  - Works to foster a culture of trusting collaboration where individuals are ready to engage in open, honest and respectful debate;
  - Is committed to learning and knowledge sharing, keeping an open mind and a willingness to be vulnerable;
  - Builds on the success of existing local efforts rather than trying to reinvent the wheel or duplicate efforts;
Places upholding and honoring youth dignity at the forefront of our juvenile justice system;
Advocates for equity of minority youth in our system and remains vigilant of disproportionate contact;
Believes that our system can and should change the life trajectories of youth in the system for the better.

GOAL: Develop a shared measurement system:
- Each OYS work group and task force takes on a specific focus area and includes broad representation from community-based youth serving programs, juvenile justice system professionals, and governmental entities which have a stake or interest in the focus area.
- OYS exists in Collaboration with the Douglas County Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI): JDAI has a goal of reducing juvenile detention populations, rooted in eight core strategies.
- The OYS Steering Committee & JDAI Collaborative include the key decision-makers, who champion juvenile justice reform and facilitate change.
- OYS work groups develop strategies and action items based upon data, work group members’ feedback, the lived experience of youth and families, and shared experience of professionals who work within the systems and programs which serve youth.
- Progress toward work group goals is tracked by staff. Work plans are regularly updated to reflect completed action items and progress toward overall goals.
- A progress report is provided at regularly scheduled OYS Steering Committee and JDAI Collaborative meetings.
- The developmental evaluation (DE) team is creating the foundation of the shared measurement system. The DE team has surveyed the Steering Committee as well as individual OYS work groups to compile a list of what they believe are the elements of the “system” which need to be measured to track the health of the system. This project remains in the beginning stages but should progress much more quickly with the addition of the OYS Data Analyst.
- DE processes continue to evolve and provide feedback loops to the OYS Executive Director to enable responsiveness to the Steering Committee, work groups, and partners.

GOAL: Begin implementation of work group action plans:
Each work group develops an issue-specific work plan containing strategies, objectives, and action items to progress toward the priority areas enumerated with the Douglas County Community Plan. The work plans of the OYS and JDAI work groups/subcommittees are embedded within the plan. There is an intentional interconnectedness between each task force, work group, subcommittee, and governing body. The membership and community is kept abreast of the actions and progress via various communication loops including monthly updates, public meeting announcements, meeting notes, quarterly newsletters, social media, and quarterly Juvenile Justice Provider Forum (JJPF) knowledge exchanges.

- Empower families to better understand the system and engage in their youths’ care.
  - The Families work group applied for CBA grant funds to provide stipends to any work group member who volunteer as current or former system-involved family representatives.
The Families work group encourages the membership of current or former system-involved families. Membership which includes voice of families who have experienced system-involvement is imperative to understanding the impact of system policies, processes and procedures.

- **Reduce system entry and recidivism** by strengthening community support and increasing access to preventative services.
  - The Prevention work group applied for CBA grant funds for FY2017 dedicated to expanding or enhancing culturally-competent, community-based prevention services for youth of color. This request was approved by the Steering Committee and Nebraska Crime Commission (NCC). Following a competitive bidding process, two prevention programs were selected to share the grant funds, one in North Omaha and one in South Omaha.

- **Increase coordination** between the justice and school systems by addressing issues such as absenteeism, school-based arrests, and reentry.
  - The School-Based Arrest task force has completed several action items on their work plan related to professional development. Trainings are selected which build the capacity of professionals working with youth within the school systems. School administrators and school security staff were trained in 2017.
  - The School Absenteeism work group obtained FY2016 CBA funding to conduct an audit of programs/services available within Douglas County to address chronic absenteeism. This project was completed by University of Nebraska, Omaha (UNO) STEPs (Support and Training for the Evaluation of Programs). STEPs, affiliated with UNO and the Grace Abbott School of Social Work, provides evaluation to programs serving children, youth and families in poverty. The evaluation was completed in July, 2017.

- **Improve processes and practices** to better coordinate case processing, improve the quality of care for individual youth, and create better outcomes as a system overall.
  - The Case Processing subcommittee is assessing trends related to Average Length of Stay at the Douglas County Youth Center (DCYC) which are directly related to juvenile court case processing issues. The subcommittee is receiving technical assistance from national partners to address their findings.
  - The JDAI Alternatives to Detention (ATD) work group once again secured CBA funds to continue to fund alternatives to detention for pre-adjudicated youth. This work group meets monthly to drill down data to identify why overrides are occurring and assessing what can be done to implement services to address system gaps.

- **Increase the equity and cultural sensitivity** of the system, including coordinating equity-related action items that arise in the work groups.
  - Each work group has addressed disproportionate minority contact (DMC) intentionally through incorporating specific action items into their work plans. Within the context of their specific focus areas, these groups address disproportionality related to race, gender, geography, and offense through tailored action items.
The DMC subcommittee addresses disproportionality of the juvenile justice system. The DMC subcommittee assists in developing strategies that reduce racial disparities in the juvenile justice system. The DMC committee reviews local statistics specific to youth of color and makes recommendations for services/programs that are culturally competent and located within the community where the youth/family resides.

The DMC committee hosted a successful community engagement learning session during 2017. The co-chairs have dialogued with the City of Omaha and Douglas County governments to raise awareness of the juvenile justice system’s disproportionate impact on youth of color.

The DMC committee collaborated with the Douglas County Grant Administrator in submitting an application for funding from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to fund a DMC and Title II Compliance Coordinator. The County was notified these funds were awarded and will become available in late 2017. The County advertised for the DMC Coordinator and Compliance Monitor position and the candidate is expected to onboard in early 2018.

- **Improve data standardization, sharing, and transparency** at both at the system and case levels, including providing data support to work groups and the effort overall.
  - The Data subcommittee provides support in the collection and dissemination of information to assist in understanding who is being detained in the DCYC and to identify areas for improvement. The data subcommittee analyzes information to evaluate the disproportionate impacts of the juvenile justice system.
  - The Data work group produces a Data Memo quarterly for system stakeholders. These memos are presented at the JDAI Collaborative.
  - The hiring of the OYS Data Analyst and Probation Data Specialist will improve the coordination and capacity of the system to utilize data to inform this work.

- **Codify best practices and change policies** that hinder the juvenile justice system, including coordinating policy-related action items that arise in the work groups.
  - One focus of the policy work group is addressing the system response to youth charged with status offenses. The work group is exploring alternative ways of addressing youth reported as runaways by their parents – in particular, youth who are not otherwise system-involved.
Operation Youth Success Steering Committee:

Steering Committee Membership Changes:

- Lisa Utterback, Executive Director at Omaha Public Schools – Addition
- Lauren Walag, Douglas County Public Defender Office replaced Scott Sladek, Douglas County Public Defender Office
- Dr. Blane McCann, Superintendent Westside Community Schools – Resignation

Notable Steering Committee Actions & Events:

- February, 2017 – Developmental Observations from TerraLuna Presented
  - Discussion regarding governance structure
  - Identified need for OYS Bylaws & Juvenile Justice System Benchmarks
- April, 2017 – Presentations from H.O.M.E. Program and the School-based Arrest Task Force
  - Developmental Observations regarding Community-based Aid – 3 options discussed.
  - CBA Contingency Budget Cut Planning
- June, 2017 – Case Processing Work Group Presentation
  - Discussion regarding OYS’s continued Stewardship of Douglas County CBA
  - OYS Steering Committee Bylaws Letter of Agreement – Fraser Stryker
- August, 2017 – Prevention Work Group Presentation
  - OYS Stewardship of Douglas County Community-based Aid
  - Formation of CBA Advisory Committee – Members appointed by County Board
  - Addition of new Steering Committee member, representing Omaha Public Schools
- September, 2017 – Juvenile Services Plan Update RE: Guiding Principles
- October, 2017 – Dr. Anne Hobbs, Juvenile Justice Institute Presentation
  - Approval of OYS Families Work Group Proposal: Linen Drive
  - CBA Process Update
  - Draft Governance Policies and Procedures presented for review
New Programs and Initiatives Implemented:

Training Opportunities:

- Implicit Bias Knowledge Exchange – with Omaha Community Partnership and Metropolitan Omaha Educational Consortium


- Strategies for Youth – *Educating the Teen Brain™* - Omaha Public Schools Middle/High School administrators (July & September, 2017)

- Strategies for Youth – *Policing the Teen Brain for Patrol™: Train-the-Trainer* – Omaha Police Department and District 4J Probation (September, 2017)


- Trauma Training for the Juvenile Justice Professional – with Juvenile Detention Alternatives Committee, presented by Project Harmony
Community Engagement Events:

- Quarterly Juvenile Justice Provider Forum Knowledge Exchange - Host
- Empowerment Network – Regular attendance at Omaha 360 Meetings
- Cinco de Mayo Celebration, South Omaha – Exhibitor Booth
- Empowerment Network: JuneTeenth Parade – Volunteers
- Empowerment Network: Native Omaha Days Parade - Volunteers
- Black Police Officers Association: Back to School Bash, Elmwood Park – Exhibitor Booth
- Empowerment Network: Christmas in the Village – Volunteers
- Police Athletics for Community Engagement – Football Finale – Volunteers
- Attendance Matters Conference – Co-Host in collaboration with the School-Based Attendance Coalition
- Linen Drive – Facilitated by members of the OYS Families Work Group
Lessons Learned that will Influence Strategic Alignment:

- Communication, encompassing meetings, social media, electronic, and in-person presentations with diverse audiences needs to expand via the backbone and membership.
- Community engagement/voice must be actively recruited and engaged.
- Additional education regarding the complexity of the Douglas County juvenile justice system with internal and external stakeholders is critical to enhance collaborations and activities.
- Disparate treatment of youth based upon race, ethnicity, gender, geography, and offense cannot be tolerated. At all system points, this will be the lens which all reform efforts look through.
- There are members of the system and community at-large who are apprehensive regarding juvenile justice system reform initiatives. The effort will take not only systemic changes but also philosophical changes.
- Coordination and collaboration with the JDAI is critical to actualize the most effective and efficient use of resources and produce the best outcomes.
- A persistent dialogue which both deepens and elevates the understanding of the foundations of healthy child and adolescent development must be championed by those engaged in the effort.

Many lessons regarding stakeholder feelings and attitudes toward system reform efforts were gleaned from the community-planning process facilitated by the OYS backbone staff from April – August, 2017. Both in-person and survey feedback was solicited from hundreds of respondents. That data is summarized below.

- **In-person Exercises**

  In-person exercises to solicit feedback regarding the priority areas for the 2018-2021 Juvenile Services Plan took place during regularly scheduled meetings for OYS workgroups, JDAI subcommittees, and the JJPF. In total, it is estimated that approximately 100 people participated in the exercise. The JJPF is comprised of community-based youth serving practitioners. The workgroups for both OYS and JDAI are comprised of system professionals, community-based youth serving practitioners, and system-related professionals (e.g., administrators, teachers).

  The key themes that arose from the in-person exercises were the need for behavioral health and substance abuse assessments and services, including parents or family in developments involving their system-involved children, a variety of comments about the type and quality of services, and the importance of growing and formalizing collaborations. Given the diverse perspectives of the groups participating, the convergence of responses across the groups speaks to the importance of these topics.

- **Survey Responses**

  The survey to solicit feedback regarding the priority areas for the 2018-2021 Juvenile Services Plan was conducted in addition to the in-person exercises in order to gather broader community input in a manner that was convenient and confidential for participants. The majority (72) of respondents who identified themselves (152) were in community-based youth serving and education fields; the total number of unique respondents was 158. That is, approximately 47 percent of identified respondents likely work with youth on a regular, if not daily, basis.

  Programs and services rose as a key theme in all four open-ended questions. It is important to note the nuances in responses: for priority areas, re-entry, aftercare, and culturally competent services were noted; for what is working well, mentoring, school-related, truancy-focused, summer employment, and Youth
Impact! were noted; for what’s missing, less restrictive funding, re-entry services, homelessness services, and sufficient quantity of providers were noted; in the general comments, the quantity and quality of providers, prevention programming, and barriers to access were noted.

Collaboration was the most frequently mentioned response to what is working well, but was also noted as something missing. The detail of those responses suggest that collaborations among providers and system professionals are increasing substantially and have paved the way for better outcomes; however, respondents also noted a need for increased coordination among professionals to ensure a better experience for the youth in addition to stronger case management and more wrap-around services.

Based on the feedback received from the in-person exercises and survey results, the proposed priority areas for the 2018-2021 Juvenile Services Plan are reducing racial and ethnic disparities, connectivity to services, parent and family engagement, communication and collaboration, quality programs and services, and a rehabilitative juvenile justice system focus.

• Conclusions and Discussion

The proposed priority areas represent a shift away from naming specific areas of focus to providing guiding principles that all juvenile justice-related initiatives must embody. This shift will allow established workgroups and organizations to apply the guiding principles to their efforts as well as allow for new groups and entities to be formed to address emerging issues. Guiding principles are intentionally broader, applicable to diverse settings, and meaningful despite potential shifts in circumstances.

It is worth noting that within the survey results and among the discussions facilitated, OYS staff noticed diverging opinions among respondents on whether the focus area should be prevention or intervention. Disagreement surrounding prevention and intervention came from many perspectives. Some believe that prevention is a community-driven effort and government funds should not be allocated to prevention efforts. Others disagree about what constitutes a relevant prevention effort (e.g., is food insecurity a juvenile justice concern?). Still others would suggest that most, if not all, funding should be directed to enhancing prevention efforts rather than intervention efforts, suggesting many intervention efforts are “too little, too late.”

Related to the topic of prevention is the dual role of the OYS Steering Committee. The OYS Steering Committee, which is also the Community Team designated to review and approve the community plan and Community-based Juvenile Services Aid (CBA) funding decisions, must be mindful of their dual missions. As the OYS Steering Committee, they are charged with exploring system reform efforts throughout the entire spectrum of the juvenile justice system. As the Community Team, they are charged with creating a community plan that is broad enough to guide their role as Steering Committee and specific enough to provide a relevant road map for CBA-funded activities. That is, the Team must be mindful that not all services provided to youth in the juvenile justice system are eligible for funding through CBA (e.g., services for adjudicated youth). Because the community plan is used as a guideline for those applying for CBA funding, the priority areas must be broad enough so as to be applicable to all reform efforts including prevention and post-adjudicated services, but must not mislead applicants to think that statutorily prohibited services are eligible for funding.
How Activities Advanced the Goals and Strategies of OYS:

In reference to the work of Douglas County’s juvenile justice system reform, the OYS Steering Committee is involved in the formation and adoption of the Douglas County Comprehensive Juvenile Services Plan “Community Plan”. Each work group/task force develops an issue-specific work plan containing strategies, objectives, and action items to progress toward the priority areas enumerated with the Douglas County Community Plan.

The priority areas identified in the 2015-2018 Douglas County community plan are as follows:

- **Reduce barriers to school attendance for youth in Douglas County and the Omaha Metro.**
  - **Progress:** The school task forces have developed strategies to address and overcome youth’s school attendance and participation deficits. The Georgetown School Justice Partnership (SJP) Pilot Program strategies have had a significant impact on youth arrests by OPD School Resource Officers. OYS partners with the School-based Attendance Coalition to promote Attendance Awareness Month activities. In 2017, OYS assisted the SBAC in hosting an "Attendance Matters" conference at the UNO Community Engagement Center. This one-day event convened government, school administrators, juvenile justice, child welfare and nonprofit stakeholders to improve school attendance rates in the Metro area.
  - **Challenges:** The OYS Program Manager currently facilitates the SJP core team meetings at South High School and Blackburn Alternative Program. Given the demands on staff, this model is not sustainable nor expandable long term without additional resources. Chronic absenteeism continues to be governed largely by statue although interpreted/applied differently by different districts. Feedback from the community continues to favor a standardized attendance approach. Systems and schools continue to stress that all absenteeism is significant as it impacts learning.
  - **Strategies:** OYS is actively engaged with Juvenile Probation and Omaha Public Schools exploring resource issues and potential opportunities related to SJs. Continued conversations regarding the balance between statute, application, and best interest of the child remain at the epicenter of school-justice reform initiatives.

- **Identify and address behavioral health issues for youth at risk of coming to the attention of the formal justice system, and for those youth who present behavioral health needs within the juvenile justice system address these needs efficiently and through trauma informed practice.**
  - **Progress:** A trauma-informed curriculum tailored for juvenile justice professionals was developed with Project Harmony. Project Harmony facilitated four trainings for juvenile justice professionals in 2017. In 2016, Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska (BHECON) held 6 trauma-informed trainings in Douglas County via Douglas county CBA funding. Trainings were attended by over 200 individuals. Additionally, a train-the-trainer course was attended by 40 individuals. These new trainers are now certified to hold trauma trainings throughout the community. OYS is a juvenile justice representative to the Trauma Informed Community effort of the City of Omaha and Douglas County.
  - **Challenges:** OYS work group members and initiative partners report increasing behavioral health challenges and dependence upon medications prior to, throughout, and after contact with the juvenile justice system. The demand for services expands far beyond current service provider capacity and resources. Access to services continues to be a theme of community concern. Often, parents/caregivers cannot afford the treatments necessary to address the needs of their children.
Ability to pay and access are cited as the primary barriers to receiving preventative treatments or managing diagnosed mental health needs. The cost of medication and/or therapeutic interventions is prohibitive to many families. Finally, there is a lack of culturally competent and linguistically appropriate resources for parents/caregivers who are parenting children with behavioral health needs.

**Strategies:** Continued work with Region 6, non-profit service providers, and educational entities is needed to explore and expand individuals pursuing behavioral health care as a profession.

- **Utilize evidence based strategies to restructure policy and practice to create strategic, collective system improvements and reform to most efficiently use resources to most effectively serve youth who become system-involved, while maintaining focus on preventing youth from entering the formal justice system.**

  - **Progress:** The Georgetown cohort’s capstone pilot was the work of ten cross-sector actors from Douglas County. Capstone strategies were conceived under the advisement of experts at the Georgetown Center for Juvenile Justice Reform. The National Association of School Resource Officers certifications and Strategies for Youth trainings employ practices supported by evidence and research. There is continued support from the Steering Committee to increase the number of evidence-based programs and services funded through CBA. Each program funded under the CBA grant is required to report quarterly outcome measures to the University of Nebraska, Juvenile Justice Institute (JJI).

  - **Challenges:** Initial challenges revolved around building trust and relationships with schools and law enforcement to participate in various trainings. Many youth-serving organizations struggle with mandatory reporting requirements due to limited resources and/or infrastructure.

  - **Strategies:** Continue to evaluate and streamline the process and procedures governing distribution of CBA. Continue to facilitate meaningful professional development opportunities with partnering organizations and prospective CBA applicants/sub-grantees.

- **Identify and develop strategies to address issues of Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) within the identified target populations.**

  - **Progress:** OYS has adopted a philosophy and statement to intentionally identify opportunities to address and impact DMC via Steering Committee resources and each work group work plan articulating DMC strategies in their targeted arena. The OYS Data Analyst spearheaded a DMC data memo based on the recommendations of the OJJDP guidelines. The outgoing OYS Data Analyst participated in at least 4 community events, providing education and information sharing/gathering related to the project. The DMC memo remains in-process during the transition of the OYS Data Analyst position.

  - **Challenges:** Challenges to the DMC work begins with an incomplete or fragmented understanding of the complex juvenile justice system. Identifying and addressing the systemic issues of inequity embedded within the policies and procedures of the justice system takes time. The OYS Data Analyst began the process of following the OJJDP DMC Technical Assistance Manual prescriptive process for identifying system contact points where DMC occurs. Due to turnover, this project has been put on hold but could resume with the new Data Analyst at the discretion of the Data/DMC committees. It is important to address the system points regarding changes to policy and procedure only after a complete, technically sound assessment has been completed.

  - **Strategies:** Continue with the OJJDP DMC project in collaboration with the DMC Coordinator and Compliance Monitor and the DMC/Data work groups. Utilize the findings of the project over time to inform and select strategies. Continue to engage the community and bolster culturally responsive
programs in the communities where youth and families reside. Continue work to create and implement standardization of definitions and reporting expectations among all system touch points. Also, develop formalized memorandum of understanding regarding sharing, access and utilization of data with signature partners.

- **Reduce the number of unstably housed youth in the Metro Area.**
  - **Progress:** OYS is a standing member of the Opportunity Youth Alliance (OYA) and its’ Executive Team. OYA is dedicated to supporting youth who are not in school or employed in the metro area. This is done via numerous and diverse partners engaged in all touch points these youth may encounter. OYA partners include youth shelters, day reporting centers, crisis care entities, schools, work force and behavioral health. The OYS Policy work group has also established a missing (run away) task force which is specifically focused on youth who are missing from home or placement. The task force is comprised of juvenile probation, non-profit service organizations, law enforcement, schools, philanthropy, youth shelters, and the County Attorney’s Office.
  - **Challenges:** The runaway task force has convened sporadically. Frequency of meetings and productivity will need to improve.
  - **Strategies:** With the hiring of the new OYS Program Coordinator, there has been a recommitment to the Runaway task force. Although still in beginning stages, the task force members are demonstrating momentum for tackling this challenging and complex topic.

- **Reduce recidivism by eliminating barriers to success for youth re-entering following disruptions in home, school, and community as a result of formal legal actions.**
  - **Progress:** To reduce recidivism OYS Prevention, Schools Reentry, Absenteeism, Families, Policy, Alternative to Detention, Disproportionate Minority Contact and the Steering Committee all work to find solutions and supports to assist youth in succeeding in the community. The OYS Reentry task force includes representatives from both out-of-home placements and school districts. These system representatives collaborate to develop strategies that will reduce barriers to student reentry.
  - **Challenges:** OYS is not a direct-service program, influence on this measure is strictly through the work of other system entities.
  - **Strategies:** The new evaluation methods produced by JJI to track outcome data of programs receiving CBA awards will provide some level of understanding about program effectiveness. Although it is not available in real-time, aggregate program-level data can be reviewed annually to inform the work.

- **Reduce incidences and exposure to youth violence through strategic, holistic community-wide efforts.**
  - **Progress:** This is accomplished within work group meetings, engagement in community meetings such as Omaha 360, South Omaha Violence Prevention Initiative, and volunteering at various community activities such as Cinco de Mayo, Native Omaha Days, Juneteenth, Harmony Week, P.A.C.E. events etc. Training opportunities facilitated via OYS such as Juvenile Justice Jeopardy™ 1) assist youth in understanding how to better interact with law enforcement; 2) provide youth tools regarding how to react in high-stress situations; and 3) remind officers how to deescalate high-stress situations. Partnerships with OPS enabled non-law enforcement School Security Officers (SSOs) to receive the highest-quality training available. This SSO training may have been the first time these SSOs, who work with Omaha students every day, were introduced to information about adolescent development,
mental health, behavioral health, trauma, special education, special needs; and received concrete tactics on how to work with youth to appropriately deescalate potentially volatile situations.

**Challenges:** Professional development opportunities have only scratched the surface of the audience that could benefit. Time and resources are a barrier to implementing a global, system-scaled approach. The ongoing training needs related to these complex topics are many. Education, reeducation, and reinforcement are key to institutionalizing the theories into practice. Continuation of initiatives is imperative due to turnover within staff and/or key management personnel and evolving science.

**Strategies:** Formalize and standardize educational and professional development opportunities. Promote opportunities for free and low cost trainings available in the community and online.

The work of OYS aligns with Douglas County's strategic planning efforts, particularly the priority of juvenile justice reform. These activities significantly enhance Douglas County's strategic plan by establishing the system-level collaboration and communication necessary to support reform.
Additional Notable Achievements & Activities:

- The OYS backbone partnered with Omaha Community Partnership and Metropolitan Omaha Educational Consortium to provide Implicit Bias training. This training further exposed youth-serving professionals to topics impacting Disproportionate Minority Contact.
- The OYS Steering Committee approved CBA awards for a number of programs and services which address the behavioral health needs of youth at-risk for juvenile justice system involvement.
- The OYS backbone partnered with the JDAI Coordinator and Project Harmony staff to plan and organize a Trauma-Training Series for Juvenile Justice Professionals.
- The OYS backbone staff partnered with Omaha Police Department, District 4J Probation, Project Harmony, One World Community Health Center and Strategies for Youth to engage law enforcement in a Policing the Teen Brain™ Train-the-Trainer. This training will increase the breadth of exposure of training efforts to law enforcement personnel. This training increases the developmental competence of OPD front line officers.
- The OYS backbone collaborated with OPS to offer Educating the Teen Brain™ to middle school and high school administrators. This training, provided by Strategies for Youth, further enhanced the School-Justice Partnerships between District 4J Probation, OPD, and OPS.
- The OYS backbone staff collaborated with OPD to offer Advanced NASRO certification to School Resource Officers. Participation in the ongoing training efforts is a demonstration of the Department’s commitment to providing the highest-quality officer presence in schools.
- The OYS backbone staff continues to volunteer at community events, particularly those located in the zip codes where the highest concentration of system-involved youth reside. This presence assists in building relationships, adding to the connectivity of the reform efforts to the youth, families, and social systems impacted by the juvenile justice system.
- The OYS Policy work group is addressing the system response to youth charged with status offenses. The backbone staff has convened a task force that to explore and address runaway behavior.
- The OYS Prevention work group has assisted a neighborhood association in securing Mayor’s grant funds for a community project. Completion of the Norwich Park Project resulted a more utilized public space for residents of all ages. By making these improvements, the neighborhood association hopes to see more families gathering in the park. They also hope to host additional neighborhood events like National Night Out in the revitalized park.
- The OYS Families work group is further diversifying membership through direct solicitation of families who have current or former system-involvement.
- The OYS Families work group hosted a successful linen drive to support financially stressed families. A number of items were donated and were distributed through the DCYC Family Liaison.
- The OYS Steering Committee, in their CBA funding recommendations allocated $1,815,902 to 22 proposals representing 5 priority areas of the Community Plan. Programs types included: Prevention/Promotion, Family Support, Mental Health, Administration, Crisis/Shelter Stabilization, Alternatives to Detention, Assessment, Crisis Response, Diversion, Data, Community-based, School-based, Truancy, and Mentoring.
Community-Based Juvenile Services Aid:
State guidance provides that each county’s comprehensive juvenile services plan and annual application for funds must be developed by a community team. In August, 2015, OYS became involved with the facilitation and dissemination of CBA when the Steering Committee was designated as the Community Team for Douglas County. OYS has collaborated with County Administration on CBA process improvements, to include continuous quality improvement of the grant application process, budget monitoring, and sub-grantee Requests for Proposals.

Douglas County Distribution of Community-based Juvenile Services Aid – Rules and Regulations for Distribution of Community-based Juvenile Services Aid were adopted by the Steering Committee in July, 2016. These rules governed the application process for FY2017 aid which occurred October – December, 2016.

In August 2017, the OYS Steering Committee voted to: 1) Ask the Douglas County Board of Commissioners to appoint an Advisory Council to review each individual proposal submitted to Douglas County for funding and make funding recommendations to the OYS Steering Committee; 2) Accept proposals directly from community providers, in addition to county departments, OYS work groups, JDAI subcommittees.

In September 2017, the Douglas County Board of Commissioners made appointments to the Advisory Council:

- DISTRICT 1 - Ricardo Ariza
- DISTRICT 2 - Juliet Summers
- DISTRICT 3 - Freddie Gray
- DISTRICT 4 - Brenda Vosik
- DISTRICT 5 - Jessica Douglas
- DISTRICT 6 - Mary Divis
- DISTRICT 7 - Catherine Brooks

- The annual CBA Request for Application (RFA) was released by the Nebraska Crime Commission on September 11, 2017. Douglas County released notice of the RFA to the public on 09/18/17. Notice was sent via email to existing CBA recipients, JDAI/OYS members, and JJPF listserv subscribers. Notice was also posted on the OYS Facebook page. Notice of the application period was also announced at Omaha 360 meetings, Criminal Justice Systems Management Council meetings, as well as the regular meetings of JDAI and OYS.

- Two technical assistance grant applicant training opportunities were offered jointly by Douglas County Administration and OYS. Trainings addressed all elements of the application in detail and offered an opportunity for prospective applicants to ask questions about the application. Applicants had until 10/06/17 to submit applications to the County.

- Twenty-six (26) grant applications, representing $2,799,907 in requests, were received by the October 6th deadline.

- On October 12th, an orientation session was jointly presented by Douglas County Administration and OYS to familiarize the newly appointed Advisory Council members with the Douglas County Community Plan as well as the statutory guidelines, rules and regulations governing CBA.
The Advisory Council reviewed each application independently (between 10/12 – 10/22). They then met on 10/23, 10/30 and 11/01 to discuss how funds should be distributed and prepare the recommendation to the Community Team. The Advisory Council considered the total available amount: $1,815,902 and compared this to the total amount of funds requested: $2,799,907. The Advisory Committee began the task of whittling down the excess of $984,005 in requests. Following, thorough deliberation, the Committee returned a recommendation in line with the available funds.

The Steering Committee (Community Team) met on November 16th to vote on the Advisory Committees recommendations for FY2018 CBA. Upon review of the recommendations of the Advisory Council and at the close of the discussion, the Team voted on full or partial funding for 22 of the 26 proposals.

The approved recommendation of the OYS Steering Committee, summarized below, was written into the application document and submitted to the NCC in December, 2017.

Upon receipt of the award notice from the NCC, the award will be presented to the Douglas County Board of Commissioners for approval. Contracts for services supported by FY2018 CBA funding will be entered into between the County and providers once the grant award has been approved by both the NCC and the Douglas County Board of Commissioners.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Recommended</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys Girls Club - Jaguar Football - Prevention</td>
<td>$ 25,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boys Town - South Omaha Prevention: Common Sense Parenting, Parent Connector, Care Coordination</td>
<td>$ 109,881</td>
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<tr>
<td>Completely KIDs - Mental Health Services</td>
<td>$ 50,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concord Mediation Center - Restorative Justice/ Peer Mediation</td>
<td>$ 5,707</td>
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<tr>
<td>Douglas County Administration - Grant Specialist</td>
<td>$ 64,931</td>
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<tr>
<td>Douglas County Attorney - Alternatives Coordinator</td>
<td>$ 31,623</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heartland Family Service – Youth Links Shelter Care</td>
<td>$ 20,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>HOME Program: Electronic Monitoring, Tracker</td>
<td>$ 90,215</td>
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<tr>
<td>Juvenile Assessment Center – Assessment &amp; Diversion, Status, Truancy, Youth Impact</td>
<td>$ 243,212</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAC Pre-adjudicated Services Array: In-Home Crisis Response, Community Coaching, Intensive Family Preservation, Day/Evening Reporting, Behavioral Health</td>
<td>$ 318,875</td>
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<tr>
<td>JDAI Coordinator</td>
<td>$ 75,004</td>
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<tr>
<td>JDAI Data Coordinator</td>
<td>$ 48,940</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midlands Mentoring Partnership - Youth Initiated Mentoring</td>
<td>$ 40,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nebraska Writers Collective - Creative Writing Program</td>
<td>$ 17,740</td>
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<tr>
<td>OYS - Backbone Support</td>
<td>$ 138,313</td>
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<tr>
<td>Police Athletics for Community Engagement (P.A.C.E.) - Prevention</td>
<td>$ 68,211</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latino Center of the Midlands - Pathways to Success - Truancy</td>
<td>$ 100,294</td>
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<tr>
<td>Release Ministries - Mentoring Program: Juvenile Justice Mentoring, Community-Based Initiative</td>
<td>$ 78,220</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heartland Family Service - Refugee Juvenile Justice Advocacy Program</td>
<td>$ 60,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thrive Center Omaha: Lead &amp; Seed, Family Support, Intensive Family Preservation</td>
<td>$ 146,844</td>
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<tr>
<td>Center for Holistic Development - Urban BOLT – Prevention</td>
<td>$ 54,879</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban League - Youth Navigator - Truancy</td>
<td>$ 28,013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 1,815,902</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Adjustments Anticipated for 2018:**

- Address work group action items from a perspective which maintains race, ethnicity, gender, and geography at the forefront of reform efforts and reduces disparate treatment.
- Continue recruitment and diversification of work group membership.
- Pursue community engagement opportunities throughout Douglas County.
- Provide technical support for CBA award recipients and prospective candidates.
- Continuous quality improvement of the CBA application process, reporting compliance monitoring, and sub-grantee Requests for Proposals.
- Articulate and operationalize OYS structure through formal agreements and written policies and procedures.
- Actualize goals related to standardized data collection.
- Establish benchmarks for monitoring the health of the local juvenile justice system.
- Utilize benchmark data to inform efforts, priorities, and decision-making related to juvenile justice system reform.

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*"The child who must be brought into the court should, of course, be made to know that he is face to face with the power of the state, but he should at the same time, and more emphatically, be made to feel that he is the object of its care and solicitude."


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**Photos:**

Page 6: Douglas County DMC Committee

Page 7: OYS Steering Committee Presentation

Page 8: Educating the Teen Brain™, Policing the Teen Brain™ Train-the-Trainer

Page 9: Juvenile Justice Provider Forum Knowledge Exchange, Christmas in the Village, Back to School Bash, Juneteenth Parade

Page 15: Omaha Public Schools, NASRO School Security Officer training Class Photo

Page 18: P.A.C.E. Flag Football Finale