



Policy and Advocacy Work Group Purpose Statement

The purpose of the OYS Policy and Advocacy Work Group, is to codify best practices and change policies that hinder the juvenile justice system, including coordinating policy-related action items that arise in the work groups.

- I. Welcome and Introductions
 - a. Present: Brad Alexander, Patrick Bloomingdale, A'Jamal Rashad-Byndon, Christine Henningsen, James Hubbard, Joy Suder, Juliet Summers, Margaret Vacek, Mary Visek, Rondy Woodard, Catherine Hall, Janee Pannkuk, Karla Dush, Debora Faga
- II. Announcements
 - a. OYS Updates:
 - i. JJPF Knowledge Exchange, Monday, July 30th, 2-4 p.m. at the County Extension Office.
 - ii. OYS is volunteering at You Turn's event at Fontenelle Park, Thursday, July 26th.
 - iii. Amber Parker has resigned, her last day with OYS will be August 3rd.
 - iv. Dominique Morgan has joined the Policy & Advocacy Work Group.
 - v. Shared JDAI work groups will be included in the co-chair meetings moving forward.
- III. Summary of last meeting's activities
 - a. Broke into small working groups and looked at the work plan; the notes from the small groups were incorporated into the work plan (handed out).
 - b. Updated the OYS website with legislative information on the Policy page
 - c. Per request from last meeting, OYS updates were handed out
 - d. Discussed bringing someone from OPS into the work group; have reached out to several individuals.
- IV. Activity
 - a. Discussion regarding an OYS State of the Union event highlighting legislative updates.
 - i. Set date for January 25, 2019 at the UNO Barbara Weitz Community Engagement Center.
 - ii. Asked for volunteers to participate in the planning before the next meeting in September.

- b. DCYC Visitation Policy-Brad, Rony and Patrick
 - i. Handed out DCYC's current visitation policy.
 - 1. Concerns with gang affiliation and security.
 - ii. Is there a possibility of reducing the visitation age range to under 8 for inclusion?
 - iii. DCYC looked at King County, Seattle, WA, which has a policy that allows this.
 - iv. Counties that have policies similar to Douglas County: King County, Seattle, WA; Pima County, Tucson, AZ; Allegheny County, Pittsburgh, PA; Ada County, Boise, ID; Lucas County, Toledo, OH; Cook County, Chicago, IL; Butler County, Hamilton, OH; Richmond County, Richmond, VA.
 - v. Siblings under 18 can visit under the current policy, but it needs to be set up in advance as a "special visit" as a private visitation.
 - 1. Can the word "special" be changed to something like "flexible" or "accommodation" so that families better realize what it means.
 - 2. Note that the age exclusion doesn't apply to these visits.
 - 3. Look at how the "special visits" are addressed in the handbook.
 - 4. In 22 years, DCYC hasn't refused a family if a special visit is requested.
 - 5. Families can always call DCYC if they have any questions.
 - 6. Cindy (Family Liaison) contacts every family to review visitation policy with them.
 - vi. Better communication with the families that there is an option available to set up a family visitation.
- c. Next steps in preparation for next Legislation year
 - i. Record Sealing (LB869)-Christine provide any updates
 - 1. Will be reintroduced in the next session.
 - 2. Making record sealing automatic if probation is successfully completed, or the court can be petitioned for sealing if probation is not successfully completed.
 - 3. Having clarity in what the process is to petition to seal.
 - 4. How to check to see if the record was sealed or not.
 - 5. In the initial notice have developmentally appropriate language.
 - 6. Needs to list the law enforcement agencies who are obligated to seal, so that families know who to contact to check.
 - 7. If members of this group have ideas about what to change or include in this bill, please contact the Senator as now is the time to do it. She wants to make sure it is solid and credible.
 - 8. This group will take another quick look at the current language in the bill, and make recommendations.

9. Juvenile court records are not confidential at the onset. Do we need to talk about juvenile court rooms being closed. Christine will send out language from last year.
- ii. Room Confinement (LB870)
 1. Some organizations were looking at having some knowledge exchanges maybe in the fall.
 2. Brad wants to talk to other jurisdictions and get more information.
 3. There is always going to be a need for room confinement to some extent, but it can definitely be improved.
 4. New language may take out the number of hours (3) for room confinement.
- iii. LB112, under LB670-removes “harm to self” as an appropriate use of detention effective July 1, 2019.
 1. Changes the landscape of these cases.
 2. The number of these cases has dramatically gone down before this bill has even gone into effect.
 3. This bill includes that 12 and under cannot be in secure confinement.
 4. Even though the bill doesn’t go into effect until next year, individual jurisdictions can change their procedures if they want prior to.
- iv. New legislation (LB1078) - introduced by Senator Crawford, would ensure that allegations of sexual abuse of children in care continue to be investigated and reported to the Legislature. The bill was amended to include provisions from a number of important child welfare bills, including LB411, which strengthens sibling placement and visitation in foster care. The bill received a committee priority and passed into law unanimously.

V. Feedback Survey – Handed out

VI. General Comment

- a. Are there loopholes in the alternative reporting requirements? If there is something that happens at an alternative and those children are not being removed and possibly putting others at risk, how does that get reported? If there is something that happens like that and it is being handled internally, how is that being handled/reported? If a child is not being removed in these circumstances, it isn’t showing up on anyone’s radar.
 - i. All facilities have to be licensed, what can be done to look at the required reporting?
 - ii. Several members are going to look into this further.
- b. Why aren’t race and class being brought up more at this table?

- VII. Follow up items bullets and points
- a. Juliet, Jim, Margaret and Karla volunteered to be part of the planning committee for the State of the Union event on January 25, 2019.
 - i. Will provide an update to the above at the September meeting
 - b. Sibling visitation-
 - i. Look at message Cindy and others share with families about visitation. Is there anything that can be altered so youth, family and possibly Public Defender's office, etc. are aware of the policy and special visitation requests.
 - ii. Brad will review allowing siblings 8 years or 12 years (due to LB670 including those 12 and under cannot be securely detained) of age and younger to visit without a special request (changing exclusion range to 9-18 or 13-18).
 - iii. Review material for possible language change (i.e. instead of special visitation, maybe flexible/accommodations)
 - iv. If anyone hears of concerns with current visitation practices, please direct them to Rondy
 - c. Christine will send out last year's language about juvenile court rooms being closed/juvenile court records not confidential at onset.
 - d. Looking into State reporting requirements for alternatives-members. Is this something Jennifer Potterf could help with?

Next Meeting: Monday, September 24, 2018, 8:30am -10am, Barbara Weitz Community Engagement Center, Marion Ivers Board Room, Room 128

Mission Statement:

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**.