Improving Outcomes for Youth in Connecticut

June 11, 2019

CSG Justice Center Presenters:
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- Shanelle Johnson, Policy Analyst, Juvenile Justice
- Emily Rogers, Senior Research Associate, Research
- Nina Salomon, Deputy Program Director, Juvenile Justice
About the Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center

National nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership association of state government officials that engages members of all three branches of state government.

Provides practical, nonpartisan research-driven strategies and tools to increase public safety and strengthen communities.
About the National Reentry Resource Center

- Authorized by the passage of the Second Chance Act in April 2008
- Launched by The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center in October 2009
- Administered in partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Assistance and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
Improving Outcomes for Youth Initiative (IOYouth) in Connecticut
IOYouth is a data-driven initiative that helps states align their policies, practices, and resource allocation decisions with what research shows works to improve outcomes for youth.

What are the recidivism rates and other outcomes for youth under system supervision, and is data collected and used to track, analyze, and improve these outcomes?

Are youth matched with the appropriate level and length of supervision and is supervision focused on addressing youth’s risks and needs?

Are resources used efficiently to provide services for youth most at risk of reoffending, and are the services youth receive demonstrated as effective?
Connecticut established a task force chaired by Rep. Walker and Secretary McCaw to oversee and guide the IOYouth initiative.


**Melissa McCaw**, Secretary, Office of Policy and Management

Abby Anderson, Executive Director, CT Juvenile Justice Alliance

Erica Bromley, Juvenile Justice Liaison, Connecticut Youth Services Association

Francis Carino, Supervisory Juvenile Prosecutor, Office of the Chief State’s Attorney

Judge Bernadette Conway, Chief Administrative Judge, Juvenile Matters

John Frassinelli, State Department of Education

Deborah Fuller, Director, Family and Juvenile Services, Court Support Services Division

Eulalia Garcia, Deputy Warden, Manson Youth Institution

Hector Glynn, Senior Vice President, The Village for Children and Families

Dr. Derrick Gordon, Director, Research, Policy and Program on Male Development at The Consultation Center, Yale University

Brian Hill, Director, Administrative Services Division, Judicial Branch

Eleanor Michael, Policy Development Coordinator, Office of Policy and Management

Ken Mysogland, Bureau Chief, External Affairs, Department of Children and Families

Marc Pelka, Undersecretary for Criminal Justice, State of Connecticut


Christine Rapillo, Chief Public Defender, Connecticut Office of Chief Public Defender

Janeen Reid, Executive Director, Full Circle Youth Empowerment

Gary Roberge, Executive Director, Court Support Services Division

Fred Spagnolo, Chief of Police, Waterbury Police Department

Martha Stone, Executive Director, Center for Children’s Advocacy
The CSG Justice Center supports the task force to make data-driven, research-based decisions on how best to improve Connecticut’s juvenile justice system.

**TASK FORCE RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Oversee initiative and scope of work
- Provide strategic direction on system gaps and challenges
- Reach consensus on system improvement strategies

**CSG JUSTICE CENTER RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Identify juvenile justice system priorities
- Adopt legislative, appropriation, and/or administrative strategies for system-wide improvement
- Provide dedicated staff to Connecticut
- Analyze system data and conduct extensive interviews/focus groups
- Deliver findings, present recommendations, and assist with translation into policy adoption

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The IOYouth Initiative has four key phases of work:

9-12 month process

- Formation of a taskforce to oversee and guide the initiative
  - Partnership with a statewide task force consisting of legislators, judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, agency leaders, and other key stakeholders

- Analyze data and review policy and practice
  - Qualitative and quantitative system assessment that includes analysis of agency data, a review of supervision and service policies and practices, fiscal analysis, and focus groups and interviews

- Present system-improvement recommendations
  - Recommendations for system improvement presented to the task force based on assessment findings targeting recidivism reduction and improved youth outcomes

- Adopt and implement new policies
  - Formalize, adopt, and implement recommendations through legislative, administrative, and fiscal changes
### IOYouth Initiative timeline and key deliverables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
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</table>
| June 2019   | • 1<sup>st</sup> Task Force Meeting | • Launch event  
• Focus groups on front end of system – referrals, diversion, detention |
| September 2019 | • 2<sup>nd</sup> Task Force Meeting | • Presentation of findings on front end of system  
• Focus groups on deep end – dispositions, probation, commitment, parole |
| November 2019 | • 3<sup>rd</sup> Task Force Meeting | • Presentation of findings on the deep end of the system  
• Focus groups to discuss potential system improvement strategies |
| January 2020 | • 4<sup>th</sup> Task Force Meeting | • Review and discuss findings and recommendations  
• Build consensus  
• Formalize improvement strategies |
Assessment findings will be based on detailed case-level data from many different data sources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Status</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diversions</td>
<td>Connecticut State Department of Education</td>
<td>Requested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detentions</td>
<td>University of New Haven</td>
<td>Requested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court Filings</td>
<td>University of New Haven</td>
<td>Requested</td>
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<tr>
<td>Probation Records</td>
<td>University of New Haven</td>
<td>Requested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitments</td>
<td>University of New Haven</td>
<td>Requested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal</td>
<td>Office of Policy and Management</td>
<td>Requested</td>
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CSG Justice Center staff will solicit input on system challenges and opportunities for improvement through focus groups with an array of system stakeholders.

- Probation Leadership and Staff
- Facility Leadership and Staff
- Youth & Parents
- Law Enforcement
- Other Youth-Serving Systems (Education, Child Welfare, Behavioral Health)
- Community-based/Residential Providers
- Public Defenders/DAs
- Judicial Officials
- Advocates
- OPM
- JJPOC
- Legislators
The success of the IOYouth initiative depends upon system stakeholders committing to five key elements of effectiveness:

- **Strong leadership from taskforce members that are committed to the assessment process and championing improvement efforts**
- **Transparent communication amongst all system stakeholders**
- **Transparent and comprehensive sharing of data and fiscal information**
- **Active engagement and buy-in from all branches of government and across agencies**
- **Continuing conversations and reflection in-between site visits**
The CSG Justice Center also routinely provides implementation support to states to ensure reforms are implemented with fidelity and high quality.

Low Intensity Technical Assistance

- Sharing examples of key performance and youth outcome measures and developing a plan for data collection
- Helping to establish an implementation committee and a detailed implementation plan with timelines, key deliverables, and responsibilities
- Providing resources and connections to vendors, experts, and peers

Moderate/High Intensity Technical Assistance

- Setting agendas and objectives for the implementation committee and directly facilitating meetings
- Developing performance and youth outcome measures and assisting with tracking and reporting.
- Drafting/reviewing policies, procedures, guidelines, RFPs, budget proposals, and other materials
Snapshot of Connecticut’s Juvenile Justice System
IOYouth will build upon the many juvenile justice reforms that Connecticut has adopted and implemented over the last several years.

- **2013**: Changed definition of juvenile to include 17-year-olds
- **2017**: Limited use of pre-trial detention
- **2017**: Removed truancy and defiance of school rules and regulations as grounds for a delinquency offense
- **2017**: Developed and implemented a Detention Risk Assessment Instrument
- **2018**: Closed Connecticut Juvenile Training School
- **2018**: Transferred legal authority and responsibility over adjudicated youth to the Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch
The State of Connecticut spends over 100 million dollars annually on its juvenile justice system.

FY2017 Juvenile Justice Related State Expenditures

- Judicial Branch: $72.3 Million
- Department of Children and Families: $31.4 Million
- State Education Department: $4 Million

Connecticut Juvenile Training School, Report to the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families, 2018
Between 2012 and 2016, arrests for youth under 18 decreased 29 percent while delinquent referrals to juvenile court decreased 17 percent.

**Connecticut Arrests for People Under Age 18 and Juvenile Court Referrals, 2011 – 2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Arrests (≤18)</th>
<th>Juvenile Court Referrals</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>11,824</td>
<td>11,398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>11,960</td>
<td>10,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>11,299</td>
<td>9,439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>9,938</td>
<td>8,168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>9,495</td>
<td>8,429</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


Overall admissions to detention decreased 58 percent between FY2013 and FY2018, and admissions for females decreased 73 percent.
Prior to closure, admissions to the Connecticut Juvenile Training School (CJTS) declined rapidly across all admission types.

Admissions to CJTS by Type, 2013 – 2017

- 2013: 252 admissions (52% Parole, 27% Congregate Care, 21% New Commitment)
- 2014: 222 admissions (51% Parole, 23% Congregate Care, 26% New Commitment)
- 2015: 176 admissions (47% Parole, 35% Congregate Care, 18% New Commitment)
- 2016: 125 admissions (42% Parole, 40% Congregate Care, 18% New Commitment)
- 2017: 87 admissions (43% Parole, 29% Congregate Care, 29% New Commitment)

Note: The facility closed on April 12, 2018.
As the number of youth in CJTS decreased, the percentage of youth with behavioral, neurodevelopmental, trauma, and substance use conditions increased.

% of Youth with Diagnosis Type, 2015 – 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuro-Developmental</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trauma</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Use</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychiatric</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CJTS Reports, 2017 – 2018
While Connecticut’s juvenile justice population has declined in recent years, the impact on recidivism rates remains unclear.

24-month Rearrest and Reconviction Rate, 2011 – 2016

Starting Probation/Supervision

- Rearrest
- Reconviction

Percent of all Starts

Calendar Year of Supervision Start

*Half-year cohort

Released from Manson Youth Institution (MYI)

- Rearrest
- Reconviction

Percent of all Releases

Calendar Year of Release

*Half-year cohort

Four core principles have been shown by research to improve outcomes for youth and will help guide the assessment of CT’s juvenile justice system.

**Principle 1**
Base supervision, service, and resource-allocation decisions on the results of validated risk and needs assessments.

**Principle 2**
Adopt and effectively implement programs and services demonstrated to reduce recidivism and improve other youth outcomes, and use data to evaluate the results and direct system improvements.

**Principle 3**
Employ a coordinated approach across service systems to address youth’s needs.

**Principle 4**
Tailor system policies, programs, and supervision to reflect the distinct developmental needs of adolescents.
IOYouth will also attempt to assess the fidelity of implementation and impact of recent juvenile justice improvement efforts.
Several potential areas of focus emerged from initial conversations with leadership and system stakeholders, including a priority on improving supervision and services for youth in the community.

- Supervision and Services for Youth with Behavioral Health Needs
- Resource Allocation Strategies, Resource Efficiencies, and Reinvestment
- Effectiveness of Community-Based Supervision and Services
- Diversion Criteria, Process, and Outcomes
- Data Collection, Sharing, and Use
- Community Based Alternatives to Incarceration
Key Questions for Discussion:

What other priority areas should be a focus for the assessment process?

What does success look like at the end of this initiative?

What potential challenges or barriers to success do you anticipate, and how can IOYouth benefit from lessons learned from past reform efforts?
Next Steps

1. Begin Quantitative Assessment and Impact Analysis
2. Share Summary of Key Themes from Initial Site Visit
3. Continue Qualitative Assessment Through Focus Groups & Surveys
4. 2nd Task Force Meeting with Presentation of Findings (September)
Join our distribution list to receive CSG Justice Center updates and announcements!


For more information, contact Nina Salomon at nsalomon@csg.org.