Florida Department of Juvenile Justice

Roadmap to System Excellence

Putting Families First in Transforming Florida into a National Model for Juvenile Justice

Our Philosophy

Build stronger, safer communities and healthy, positive relationships within families through collaboration with stakeholders.

Assess children’s strengths, risks, and needs to determine services and treatments that are culturally sensitive, and do not restrict, intrude, or harm.

Provide the help, encouragement, and support that every child deserves, giving them hope and leading them towards success.

http://www.djj.state.fl.us       http://www.djj.state.fl.us/Roadmap-to-System-Excellence
http://www.facebook.com/FlaDJJ   https://twitter.com/fladjj
Dear Stakeholder,

As the nation’s largest, centrally organized juvenile-justice agency, Florida’s Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) has a unique opportunity to establish a system of excellence for the care of at-risk and delinquent youth along the most comprehensive spectrum. Approximately 100,000 youth touch our system each year, and a far greater number are at risk to do so. The impact of the treatment and services these at-risk and delinquent youth receive has a far-reaching impact on the safety and welfare of the citizens in Florida. Everyone – parents, siblings, neighbors, schools, businesses, stakeholders and communities – is affected. Therefore, it is imperative that these youth, who often have turbulent lives and struggles, are guided to the right path and supported in their journey to become law-abiding, successful family members, workers, community members, and citizens. Otherwise, a cycle of crime is perpetuated, young people’s valuable potential is unrealized, and resources are squandered.

To best shepherd these youth into successful adulthood, we at DJJ have been strategically evaluating and reforming our approach to juvenile justice. We are transforming the way we treat youth who touch our system to best ensure their rehabilitation and the safety of our communities.

At the root of our reform are two strategies. First, we are capitalizing on the latest research and data to better understand how adolescents develop, think, and behave and what treatment and services are most effective. This foundational information guides our decision making and application of resources. Second, we are collaborating with national and state stakeholders, especially families who will permanently mold and grow their children. All our partners are key to strengthening our youth, families, and communities. We value their roles and encourage their involvement. Their feedback, support, and assistance are essential. An inclusive network with open communication will help ensure a successful, supportive system.

Our plan, or “Roadmap”, is to:

- Strengthen our capability and allocate more resources to identify children, as young as possible, who begin to exhibit problem behavior, get to the root of the causes (their risks and needs as well as that of their families), and prevent their involvement in the juvenile justice system.
- Appropriately divert youth who can safely be held accountable through serving and treating them in their homes and communities, with an emphasis on strengthening the youth and family and immersing them in their community support system.
- Provide customized plans that recognize youths’ individual needs, capitalize on their strengths, reduce their risks, and prepare them for a successful transition to, and unification with, their family and community support system from the moment they come in contact with us.
- Care for youth in the least restrictive and most appropriate service environments.
- Wisely allocate our resources to the most effective programs, services, and treatments at the most impactful points along the juvenile justice continuum.
Each of these elements is critical to ensuring we have the right combination of services and sanctions, in the right place, at the right time, as we care for each youth in the right way and keep the public safe.

Already, Florida’s efforts have yielded many successes and improved outcomes for at-risk and troubled youth. Florida’s DJJ will continue to build stronger youth and families who are connected to, and supported by, their community as it builds a stronger state and a juvenile justice system of excellence for at-risk and delinquent youth. This will be done with a dedicated team of DJJ and provider staff and Florida’s families and communities.

Sincerely,

Wansley Walters
Secretary
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The Necessity of Reform

The Roadmap to System Excellence (Roadmap) explains many of the changes being made at the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). These changes are necessary to provide the right services, in the right place, in the right way, at the right time to youth in our care. We are passionately committed to that goal and it drives all that we do.

We are updating our practices and policies because current research shows:

- Previous efforts of juvenile justice systems have done little to deter crime and decades of harsh punishment for serious offenders have not been effective. Recidivism rates barely changed over that time. But the answer is not to inflict harsher punishments. Recent and compelling research has shown that the previous “tough on crime” and “scared straight” approaches, such as weekend lock-ups, are not deterrents to crime. If anything, they are the opposite. Removing children from their home and confining them with other delinquent youth often only serves to create an environment where they learn to be better criminals. **We must make strategic decisions about the detention and residential placement of youth and strive to care for them in the least restrictive environment.**

- There are distinct and notable differences between children and adults, especially in terms of brain development. Youth are not little adults. Their brains will not fully mature until the age of 25 or 26, and they do not have the decision-making skills or self-control that adults do. They may see themselves as invincible and fail to realize the consequences of their actions, even after their behavior. When youth are asked why they chose to make a poor decision and reply that they "don't know," that actually may be the truth. Therefore, treating youth as adults will not improve their delinquent behavior and may further contribute to the trauma, abuse, and/or neglect that about 80% of juvenile justice-involved youth have experienced. **We must understand the characteristics unique to adolescents and incorporate strategies to best serve them.**

- Evaluating youth’s risks and needs (and those of their families) and providing appropriate services and treatment that specifically match their unique profile is critical and is the most effective way to deter future offending. No youth is the same as the next, and all must have a carefully crafted plan to care for, guide, and unify them with their family and community. **We must recognize that each youth is different and individualize our services.**

- Families are indeed critical to the success of their children and to ensuring they are non-delinquent. However, families face many challenges and some parents/caregivers are struggling with their own issues (financial, homelessness, drug or alcohol abuse, mental health, lack of education, inadequate parenting skills, etc.). As DJJ assesses the needs
and risk factors of the youth who are involved with our system, or in danger of becoming so, families must be included in assessment of needs, wrap-around services and treatment, and community connections. **We must support the entire family unit to support their children’s success.**

- **Gender responsiveness and trauma-informed care must be infused in all we do.** Girls enter the juvenile justice system differently from boys, frequently for non-violent offenses. An understanding of who these girls are, the prevalent history of trauma and abuse they have suffered, and the path they took to the juvenile justice system is vital to assisting the girls currently in the system and prevent more girls from entering it. Similarly, boys' characteristics, histories, and paths to DJJ must be understood. We must constantly ensure appropriate strategies, plans, programs, and services are specifically designed and utilized for the care and treatment of both girls and boys in our system.

- **Justice must be restored with a balanced approach.** A basic framework DJJ follows is one of a balanced approach to restorative justice. That is, in carrying out its duties, there is a three-part focus on community safety, accountability, and competency development. The aftermath of a crime must include the healing of all parties and repairing what was destroyed.

- Community safety is actually compromised when youth are inappropriately arrested, detained, committed, violated on probation, or released. **We must reduce recidivism** by focusing on prevention services, appropriately diverting youth from the juvenile justice system through the Civil Citation process, utilizing alternatives to secure detention, using diversion programs to divert youth from the court process, and effectively transitioning youth home and back into their communities.

- A just system fairly and equally arrests, detains, diverts, commits, and provides services and care for all youth regardless of any potential form of discrimination. **We must work with our law enforcement and judicial partners, as well as our own staff, to ensure no particular youth population is over-represented at any point in our system.**

- No one agency or entity can change a community or solve its problems. A collaborative effort is vital. **Silos within DJJ must be eliminated and collaboration with all stakeholders must be achieved.**

- Florida Statutes contain outdated, ineffective, and inefficient laws and lack certain provisions to help youth be successful. **We must work with stakeholders to review, discuss, and recommend changes to Chapter 985 throughout a comprehensive revision process.**

- **We must continually engage in process, program, and service improvements throughout all we do and be wise with our resources.**
Desired Outcomes of the Roadmap

This document serves as DJJ’s Roadmap, explaining the agency’s immediate and long-range plans and the rationale for them. It outlines specific goals in key areas and serves as a guide to understanding DJJ’s efforts to:

- Reduce juvenile delinquency.
- Redirect youth away from the juvenile justice system.
- Provide appropriate, less restrictive sanctions.
- Provide optimal services and care.
- Reserve serious sanctions for those youth deemed the highest risk to public safety.
- Focus on the rehabilitation of at-risk and delinquent youth.

Begun in 2012 and continuing over the next two years, DJJ will build upon its recent, notable achievements and follow its Roadmap to fortify a system of excellence, a model for juvenile justice. The agency will develop its model through strategic decisions supported by data, research-based practices, and measurable outcomes. These will lead to improved results for youth, families, and communities, as well as a significant savings to the taxpayers of Florida. Enhancements will follow a cycle of continuous improvement as DJJ manages its population and resources to provide the right services, in the right place, in the right way, at the right time to best meet the needs of at-risk and delinquent youth.

“I would like to endorse, with enthusiasm, your Roadmap for System Excellence Approach. Please know that I have admired – for many years now – [Secretary Walters’] national example of system reform in Miami and, now, for all of Florida. Your emphasis has been so needed. Indeed, it has saved so many young people who now can go ahead and be contributing adults. With admiration and the greatest and fullest support for your example of leadership, and you.”

David Lawrence, Early Child Initiative Foundation
Creation of the Roadmap

To create a comprehensive strategy, DJJ examined agency practices, services, and results; exhaustive analyses and studies by internal and external stakeholders and consultants; recommendations from Governor Scott’s Juvenile Justice Transition Team; DJJ’s Strategic Plan; and the report of the Blueprint Commission. The initial draft Roadmap was written and distributed in October 2012 and feedback was solicited and welcomed.

More recently, Secretary Walters traveled the state and was joined by local leaders and staff from DJJ to meet with citizens across Florida on a listening tour. At media interviews, Editorial Board meetings, visits to detention facilities and residential programs, individual and group stakeholder meetings, and Town Hall meetings, we listened and answered questions. These initial rounds of events were just the kickoff. This strategy of increased communication and feedback gathering will be a permanent practice. NOTE: The reports and recordings of past events, as well as information on future events, can be found at http://www.djj.state.fl.us/Roadmap-to-System-Excellence.

Additionally, targeted workshops were held with groups on specific issues, such as detention cost share and the role of law enforcement. Gathering key partners to discuss issues and formulate partnerships to craft solutions is part of our strategy to build unified plans and joint successes.

From the input gathered from over 1500 citizens around Florida, we have updated the Roadmap to include suggested clarification and revisions (see “New Additions to the Roadmap” for a list of new topics included in this draft as a result of stakeholder input). This version is a more comprehensive and detailed plan meant to provide understanding and garner support. It is a plan meant to inspire others to join us in helping our youth, families, and communities in an atmosphere of collaboration and ownership of both the problems and ultimately the successes.

The Roadmap also is the result of careful analysis of data, research, and best practices around the nation. As DJJ moves forward with the Roadmap, we will continue the practices of data-driven decision making, soliciting feedback, reporting progress, and making modifications as needed.
Institutionalizing the Roadmap

Two major initiatives that will permanently establish the goals in the Roadmap revolve around its internal and external stakeholders: DJJ staff and the citizens of Florida (represented by their legislators).

DJJ Staff – Juvenile Justice Reform Specialists

During the summer of 2013, DJJ hired a headquarters Juvenile Justice Reform Coordinator, and a Reform Specialist in each circuit to specifically assist with promoting and supporting the reform initiatives. These existing probation positions now have modified duties that focus on institutionalizing and normalizing the reform initiatives.

Reform Specialists will serve as community liaisons, connecting the local juvenile justice offices and staff with community providers and services. They will be particularly focused on transition services, community re-entry, alternatives to secure detention, and diversion programs. This includes increasing the utilization of existing programs, coordinating with stakeholders to develop new programs, and coordinating between referring agencies and service providers. The Reform Specialists will be tasked with ensuring that current community services are in line with DJJ’s reform efforts and identifying gaps in services.

Statute Re-write

Since 2012, DJJ has been reviewing Chapter 985 with the goal of bringing the statutes in line with current practices, as well as the initiatives presented in this Roadmap. Florida Statutes that govern DJJ must incorporate best practices in order to help reduce the number of youth within the juvenile justice system and allow them to be better served in their communities. It is imperative that state law enables DJJ and its stakeholders to provide the right service, to the right youth, at the right time, and in the right way.

DJJ will continue to reach out to stakeholders throughout the state for comment about how the juvenile justice system works in Florida. This is an all-inclusive and open process that will help shape DJJ’s legislative proposals for the 2014 legislative session. Anyone who would like to participate in these discussions may contact us at [http://www.djj.state.fl.us/get-involved/the-future-of-juvenile-justice](http://www.djj.state.fl.us/get-involved/the-future-of-juvenile-justice).
Executive Summary: Goals and Objectives

I. Manage the At-risk Youth Population

A. Prevent More Youth from Entering or Becoming Further Involved in the Juvenile Justice System

Adolescents and children routinely “act out” due to issues at home, poor school performance, peer pressure, and mental and emotional problems. Lack of a support system should not cause them to become involved in the juvenile justice system. It is our responsibility to make sure that these youth are given preventative assessments and services so that they have the opportunity to stay delinquency-free. Proactive prevention and interventions will not only save millions of taxpayer dollars, it can save the futures of these youth and keep communities safe.

1. Serve a minimum of 21,300 youth through delinquency prevention programs.
2. Assess at-risk youth to determine needed services.
3. Reduce minority youth arrests and dispositions.
4. Increase awareness of prevention opportunities in all circuits.
5. Increase the involvement of the faith-based community.
6. Strengthen gender appropriate strategies, programs, and services designed to keep girls and boys out of the juvenile justice system.
7. Provide schools with resources to prevent truancy.
8. Increase mentoring opportunities for at-risk youth.

B. Divert More Youth from Involvement with the Juvenile Justice System

Data shows that more than 60% of first-time offenders will not have further contact with the juvenile justice system over at least an 18-month follow up period. These youth should be diverted from DJJ through innovative practices such as civil citation. Community-based supervision is more effective in discouraging further delinquency without the negative consequences of entering our system.

1. Increase the number of youth issued a civil citation.
2. Reduce the number of school arrests.
3. Identify and provide services for youth younger than 12 years old.
4. Divert more youth from court.
C. Utilize Secure Detention Only When Necessary

If youth do not pose a risk to public safety and are likely to show up for court, they should receive appropriate alternatives to secure detention and remain with their families and in their communities. Instead of serving as a deterrent to future offenses, research finds that secure detention may increase the likelihood of a youth to re-offend, particularly those who initially are identified as a low risk to re-offend.

1. Decrease the number of youth who are a low risk to re-offend and placed in secure detention.
2. Increase identification of victims of human trafficking and connect them to appropriate services.
3. Decrease the number of youth admitted to secure detention for Failure to Appear.
4. Decrease the number of youth admitted to secure detention for Violations of Probation.

D. Provide Optimal Services

For youth deemed appropriate for secure detention, residential placement, and any juvenile justice program or service, it is imperative that we provide an atmosphere that is safe and secure. We also must provide services focused on the individual needs and rehabilitation of youth. Our services must include mentoring opportunities, evidence-based or promising practices for interventions, opportunities for family involvement, gender responsive programs, trauma-informed practices, vocational opportunities, and effective behavior management systems.

1. Assess and improve the quality of evidence-based service delivery and promising delinquency interventions.
2. Enhance strategies to assist youth through change.
3. Conduct daily life skills groups at all secure detention centers.
4. Increase family engagement efforts.
5. Provide quality gender specific services and programming.
6. Expand and enhance the delivery of trauma-informed services throughout DJJ.
7. Increase opportunities to earn vocational certificates in residential programs.
8. Monitor and improve effective behavior management systems.
9. Expand the services and number of Juvenile Assessment Centers.
10. Fully implement the Model Juvenile Community Resource Center in Alachua County.
11. Expand the services and number of Youth Reporting Centers.
E. Ensure Appropriate Youth Placement and Utilization of Residential Beds and Redesign Existing Resources

Youth who are serious offenders, committing violent acts and considered an ongoing threat to public safety, represent a small portion of DJJ youth. They require the most intensive and expensive services. Only serious offenders need to be placed in secure detention and residential treatment—the deeper end of DJJ services. Through outcome-based treatment and services, we will strengthen their chance of success and protect public safety. Also, DJJ must ensure it has the capacity at every level to identify appropriate needs and services when youth exhibit such poor behavior that they are referred to the juvenile justice system. Each youth is different and our approach to serving them has to be individualized; different needs call for different methods.

1. Improve strategic decision making in the placement of youth.
2. Validate the risk/needs assessment instrument for residential youth.
3. Continue to use community-based mental health and substance abuse services effectively for non-violent girls and boys in every circuit as an alternative to residential commitment.
4. Continue to reduce residential bed capacity.
5. Reduce recidivism of youth who complete residential placement through transition and re-entry services.

II. Manage the Resources

A. Improve Communication and Collaboration

With approximately 100,000 youth having some level of involvement with our system each year, DJJ must be a careful steward of its internal and external resources. These valuable resources are used to ultimately serve every Florida family. To be accountable to them, DJJ must make the most of collaborative relationships, have a well-trained staff, and make wise fiscal decisions.

1. Seek, consider, and respond to stakeholder input.
2. Foster coordinated services and information-sharing partnerships with other state agencies.
3. Expand collaborative efforts with the Department of Children and Families to care for youth dually served in the child delinquency and welfare systems.
4. Integrate DJJ services with workforce providers.
5. Cultivate positive relationships with the private provider community.
6. Conduct workshops, trainings, and presentations and develop resources for various stakeholder groups.

7. Ensure court and law enforcement personnel are kept updated on youth’s progress and status.

8. Increase availability of data to the public.

B. Enhance Workforce Effectiveness

The strength of DJJ’s staff is reflected in the quality of care provided to its youth. DJJ will ensure it employs the best direct-care staff, reduces staff turnover, and ensures staff success through effective training.

1. Ensure direct-care employees’ suitability for working with delinquent youth.

2. Reduce turnover and improve employee job satisfaction.

3. Refine and strengthen the role of a Juvenile Probation Officer.


5. Train on specialized mental health.

C. Strengthen Procurement, Contract Monitoring and Quality Improvement Practices and Processes

DJJ must make the best decisions and provide the most appropriate services to effectively and efficiently serve youth, their families, and the community. The agency also must manage its resources well and be fiscally responsible. Through improvements in contract procurement, management, and monitoring, we will ensure that the best services possible are provided. DJJ will improve methods for contract oversight and the review of service delivery, emphasize the implementation of evidence-based and promising practices, award contracts to providers who demonstrate the highest impact on youth within a broad continuum of in-home and out-of-home services.

1. Improve the procurement process by implementing the use of the Invitation to Negotiate.

2. Conduct annual internal reviews at detention centers.

3. Evaluate tools used to assess risks and needs.

4. Implement a shared services model for provider management and oversight.
D. Realign Resources

Funds will be redirected from reductions of unused residential beds and the decreasing population in residential placement and secure detention which result from better decision making. Resources will be shifted away from out-of-home residential placements and into front-end community-based services.

1. Shift resources from reduced residential beds to the remaining residential programs and front-end, community-based services.
2. Shift investments from reduced secure detention populations to alternatives to detention.
3. Realign the FY 2013-14 budget structure.
4. Ensure prevention and diversion services are cost effective and increase public safety.
5. Increase transition services.
6. Examine the proportion of arrested youth that are serious, violent, and chronic offenders.
7. Recommend changes to Chapter 985, Florida Statutes.
2012 Draft Roadmap Endorsements

As DJJ shared its initial draft Roadmap with stakeholders, it received letters of endorsement from various organizations (listed below). We thank them for their support and confidence.

- Children’s Home Society of Florida, Palm Beach County
- Department of Children and Families
- Department of Corrections
- Early Childhood Initiative Foundation
- Eckerd
- Florida Network of Youth and Family Services
- Florida Tax Watch
- Guardian Ad Litem
- Home Builders Institute (HBI)
- Human Services Associates Inc.
- Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention State Advisory Group
- The Tallahassee Democrat
- The Urban League of Greater Miami, Inc.

“We place our full support behind DJJ’s Roadmap to System Excellence, which we believe has the potential to transform Florida into a national model for juvenile justice. These reforms provide troubled youth with the right service in the right place at the right time while saving taxpayers money. As a result, we can expect to see stronger families, stronger communities and a stronger economy.”

Dominic Calabro, President and CEO, Florida Tax Watch
Introduction to the Roadmap Goals

We, at DJJ, do not believe that children want to be criminals; they are socialized into criminal behavior or so desperate that they find no other choice. Meeting their basic needs, supporting their positive choices, ensuring a meaningful education, and connecting them with positive role models and opportunities for employment will offer them positive options.

Fortunately, crime has been decreasing in Florida and around the nation. With the plans outlined in this Roadmap, DJJ hopes to prevent even more youth from becoming delinquent, better serve and treat youth and their families, and keep youth from coming back into our system.

To achieve the improvements outlined in the Roadmap, DJJ has identified the following goals:

- Prevent more youth from entering or becoming further involved with the juvenile justice system.
- Divert more youth from involvement with the juvenile justice system.
- Utilize secure detention only when necessary.
- Provide optimal services.
- Ensure appropriate placement and utilization of residential beds and re-design existing resources.
- Improve communication and collaboration.
- Enhance workforce effectiveness.
- Strengthen procurement, contract monitoring, and quality improvement practices and processes.
- Realign resources.

Basically, we must provide the most appropriate services and treatment to better equip youth to conquer their challenges and remain united with, and successful in, their families and communities.
Manage the At-risk Youth Population

As DJJ adjusts its practices, programs, and resources to better meet the needs of at-risk and delinquent youth, careful attention must be paid to which youth need to be involved in our system and at what level. The foundation of the Roadmap is based on a generalization of three types of youth:

1. Those who are at-risk of entering our system (and can be prevented from doing so.)
2. Those who are not a serious risk and can be best served in their community (diverted from the system, secure detention, or the court process itself).
3. Those who need to be detained in our custody to protect the public (in secure detention or residential commitment).

1. Prevention

Adolescents and children routinely “act out” due to issues at home, poor school performance, peer pressure, and mental and emotional problems. We must keep them out of our system when they don’t belong there. They need to get the right services before problems escalate. It is our responsibility to make sure that these youth are given preventative assessments and services so that they have the opportunity to stay delinquency-free. Proactive prevention will not only save millions of taxpayer dollars, it can save the futures of these youth. For youth who do get arrested, efforts must be made to prevent those youth from re-offending or becoming involved deeper in the juvenile justice system.

2. Diversion

Although delinquency arrests have declined, too many youth are unnecessarily placed in the juvenile justice system and others are involved at levels that are costly and contribute to negative outcomes. Youth who pose little risk to public safety or can receive any needed treatment in their community should be diverted from detention, probation, and residential services.
a. Divert From the Juvenile Justice System

Over 60% of youth arrested for a first-time offense will have no further contact with the juvenile justice system over at least an 18-month follow up period, and should be diverted from DJJ. Their initial experience with the juvenile justice system is sufficient to deter them from further offenses. Community-based intervention is more effective in diverting these youth from further delinquency without the negative consequences or expense of entering a juvenile justice system. For example, first-time misdemeanants with a strong support system present a low risk to community safety. They can probably be best served through innovative practices such as Civil Citation so that they have appropriate, meaningful sanctions but are not permanently disadvantaged from getting a job, joining the military, or being accepted to college.

b. Divert From Secure Detention

Those youth exhibiting more serious delinquent behavior also must be held accountable and provided necessary services and treatment. Oftentimes this is best done within their communities where they can learn to be law-abiding and successful citizens, especially for youth who are lower risk but have a higher number of needs. Youth who do not have the

Youth "Adams"
This type of youth is doing fine at home and at school. He has good support around him, good health, and lives in a safe and secure environment where his basic needs are met. He has mostly pro-social peers. Nevertheless, this youth, whether on a dare or a conscious decision to do something foolish, commits a crime. He steals something, damages property, or gets in a fight. This behavior, while wrong and worthy of consequences, is not at the level of deserving consequences that haunt him throughout his life. It was a mistake—the first and probably the last. This youth deserves sanctions which hold him accountable, preserve public safety, and repair the harm done, but he does not need to become a part of the juvenile justice system. A law enforcement officer can impose sanctions through the Civil Citation process but avoid the youth having a record and having him placed with delinquent youth in a detention center. Ultimately, his case will be diverted from prosecution, so this is a speedy resolution (immediate consequences are most effective), a cost savings, and a better outcome for the youth.

Low risk + low needs = diverted before entering the system

Youth "Jefferson"
This type of youth may have a similar background to Youth Adams but with less positive support, success, and connections, and he has engaged in unacceptable behavior of a more serious nature. The youth is given a chance to prove he can be more responsible in a setting other than secure detention, such as at home without or with restrictions such as electronic monitoring. Sanctions will be imposed after disposition, and the youth is likely to be placed on probation and/or in a diversion program.

Low/moderate risk/needs = divert from secure detention
basic necessities of safety, food, shelter, etc. often act out inappropriately. That does not excuse their behavior but helps understand it and plan for how to prevent future offending. If these youth are not likely to jeopardize public safety and can still complete sanctions and receive services within their regular environment, they should remain there. It is where they will have to learn to be successful and law-abiding and make pro-social choices and connections. If youth do not pose a risk to public safety and are likely to show up for court, they should receive appropriate alternatives to secure detention and remain with their families and in their communities. Instead of serving as a deterrent to future offenses, research finds that secure detention may increase the likelihood of a youth to re-offend, particularly those who initially are identified as a low risk to re-offend. The act of removing them from their homes, communities, and support systems can cause negative unintended consequences. During fiscal year (FY) 2011-2012, a felony offense was the primary reason for being detained by DJJ for only a third (34%) of youth.

c. Divert From the Court Process

Youth who do not need to be removed from society to ensure public safety but have a number of needs and require careful monitoring can still be successfully held accountable and treated without undue risk to public safety. By working carefully with the Public Defender and

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Youth "Madison"

This type of youth is one who commits a delinquent act(s) that is more serious. He also scores higher on an assessment of his risks and needs. He may be at a crossroads of realizing his mistakes or choosing delinquency. He may have undiagnosed mental health problems or untreated substance abuse addictions; a violent or unstable home environment; disabilities; etc. This is a youth, and quite possibly a family, who needs treatment and services and who best can be supported in his community where his support system is and where he will have to learn to function successfully. Removing him from his home, school, community, will label him, be costly, and add additional challenges of re-integration. With close oversight and a comprehensive plan, this youth can be held accountable and set up to turn his life around. He can be diverted from secure detention and residential commitment.

\[
\text{Low/moderate risk + low/moderate/high needs} = \text{divert from commitment}
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1 The Justice Policy Institute, “The Dangers of Detention: The Impact of Incarcerating Youth in Detention and Other Secure Facilities.”
State Attorney, the best outcomes can be achieved through a variety of diversion alternatives geared specifically for that individual youth. Uniting youth with the best programs and treatment in the community not only yields better results for the youth and curtails recidivism but also avoids displacing the youth and separating him from his family and community.

3. Detained Youth

Youth who commit violent acts and are considered an ongoing threat to public safety represent a small portion of DJJ youth. They require the most intensive and expensive services. To best serve and treat them, as well as use resources effectively, efficiently, and strategically, only serious offenders should be placed in secure detention and residential treatment -- the deeper end of DJJ services. Through outcome-based treatment and services, we will strengthen their chance of success and protect public safety.

a. Secure Detention

Prior to their first appearance, disposition hearing, or appearance for a violation of probation, youth who represent a risk to public safety or are a risk to not appear for court should, and will, be securely detained. These youth are evaluated to determine whether their risk level warrants them staying in secure detention, according to criteria outlined in Statute, before their first court appearance and until they appear in court for a decision by a judge regarding sanctions and services. Dispositional recommendations are made for the least restrictive, most appropriate placement. Violations of probation are addressed through a decision making tool and after an examination of all circumstances. Placing a youth in secure detention unnecessarily is ineffective and a waste of time and money.

b. Commitment to a Residential Program

Removing youth from their family, school, and community is reserved for those who are the most serious offenders and pose a high risk to re-offending. They need extensive treatment and services to restore them (and their families) during their commitment and prepare them to transition back into their homes and communities. Improved social, emotional, educational, family, employability, and decision-making skills are often needed. Equipping them and surrounding them with continued DJJ support, as well as that of their families and communities, will help protect against their future chances of offending and help them become successful adults. Fortunately, this is a small population of youth but one that requires intensive supervision and the greatest resources. With indeterminate sentencing, they will not be released until they have demonstrated the ability to not harm the public further.

Declining delinquency arrest rates have reduced the number of youth referred for residential placement. As shown in the chart, that number has decreased by 51% in the past five years.
Although the number of youth committed to residential placement has declined, the issue of managing resources to best meet the needs of youth is still an important consideration. In FY 2012-13, of the DJJ youth committed to a residential program, almost half (45%) were committed for misdemeanors or because of non-law probation violations.

In the past, youth who were identified as low or moderate risk to re-offend have been inappropriately placed in residential programs. Research shows that for youth, particularly those who are a low-risk to re-offend, residential commitment actually may increase the likelihood of future offending.\(^2\)

DJJ has been actively working to address this issue during the past two years. In 2011 DJJ was selected as one of four states to participate in the Juvenile Justice System Improvement Project (JJSIP), a national initiative to reform the juvenile justice system by translating "what works" into everyday practice and policy. Administered by Georgetown University’s Center for Juvenile Justice Reform, the JJSIP provides a framework for implementing best practices throughout the entire juvenile justice system. As a result of the JJSIP efforts, over the past two years DJJ has made significant progress in reducing the number of youth identified as those with a low or moderate risk to re-offend that are placed in residential programs. The table below illustrates the decline in this population since January 2011.

As DJJ continues to implement the JJSIP, programs will be evaluated using the Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP) to evaluate how closely delinquency


Youth "Monroe"

The last group of youth is those who are the most serious offenders. They are a high risk to community safety and have a great deal of needs that require intensive services and treatment. These youth are best served in secure detention and then in a residential commitment facility where they cannot commit further crimes and are monitored very carefully. These youth require intensive and expensive services, and DJJ must devote necessary resources to see that they are provided them while they are in commitment, as well as when they transition back to their communities. This will involve a “wrap-around” approach to build a healthy support structure and involve the family in the treatment and re-entry and service provision as the situation calls for. This group is a very small number of youth who need a great deal of attention and resources.

High risk + low/moderate/high needs = residential commitment
interventions provided in our programs are being delivered with fidelity to most effectively meet the needs of our youth. Detailed information about the JJSIP and SPEP initiatives can be found on the DJJ website at: http://www.djj.state.fl.us/research/latest-initiatives/juvenile-justice-system-improvement-project-(jjsip).

Also, the recidivism rate for youth leaving these programs has remained basically unchanged for the past several years. These factors have compelled DJJ to increase efforts while a youth is in residential placement and while transitioning back to the community to lower the recidivism rate.

Whereas a one-size-fits-all policy relying heavily on residential commitment would be an easier process, caring for youth as individuals in a way that builds their support system in their own homes and communities is labor-intensive but outcome-positive and less expensive.

“The Roadmap to System Excellence is an effective, comprehensive and collaborative approach to guide at-risk and troubled children to better choices and brighter futures... I am impressed by DJJ’s thoughtful approach to reforms aimed at keeping troubled youth out of the juvenile justice system. I also agree that if funding is invested in community services, we can keep more children out of deep-end programs and adult prisons.”

Alan F. Abramowitz, executive director, Florida Guardian Ad Litem
Goal: Prevent More Youth from Entering or Becoming Further Involved in the Juvenile Justice System

DJJ provides delinquency prevention services and programs designed to reduce juvenile crime and protect public safety through contracts and grants to local providers throughout the state. The Office of Prevention targets youth who may be at risk for arrest due to behaviors such as substance abuse and experimentation, poor academics, negative peer association, family difficulties, environmental challenges, school attendance, anger management, running away, and mental health issues. For those youth who do end up arrested, the Office of Prevention supports keeping those kids from re-offending or ending up in secure confinement.

With Florida ranking the second largest jurisdiction in the nation for the number and rate per 100,000 of youth incarcerated, DJJ must develop, promote, and invest in more prevention programs. DJJ must also dispel the notion that youth must get into serious trouble before they, and their families, get help.

As DJJ identifies and serves those youth identified as at-risk of becoming involved in the juvenile justice system, we are putting resources at the front end to stop early problems. Efforts include increased use of risk assessments; collaboration with law enforcement, the State Advisory Group, and schools; expanded faith based involvement; more programs that are evidence based or replicate best practices; additional support for family involvement and education; enhanced services for specific populations (girls, over-represented minorities, children with learning or behavioral disabilities, foster children, and younger children), and increased mentoring and workforce readiness opportunities.

NOTE: While the previous version of the Roadmap indicates that prevention efforts will be geared toward youth ages 10-17, we will work to address the needs of even younger children.

“Proactive prevention not only saves millions of taxpayer dollars, it can save the futures of our troubled youth. DJJ has presented a plan to transform the current juvenile justice system to more effectively meet the needs of Florida’s youth, enhancing public safety and enriching the lives of all Floridians.”
T. Willard Fair, president and CEO, The Urban League of Greater Miami, Inc.

Serve a minimum of 21,300 youth (2% increase from the previous year) through delinquency prevention programs during FY 2012-2013.

Prevention programs serve at-risk youth ages 10 to 17 that may be experiencing behavioral, school, and family difficulties. Recent research emphasizes the importance of working with younger children to prevent future serious misbehaviors that may result in deeper involvement in the juvenile justice system. As a result, DJJ will work to address the needs of even younger children (see section under diversion goal). Further improvements in the area of prevention include youth members being appointed to the State Advisory Group (SAG); greater collaboration with the Department of Children and Families to care for cross-over youth and share data; expansion of Children in Need of Services/Families in Need of Services to rural counties; and expansion of services for girls. DJJ will continue to increase involvement in communities and provide dedicated resources for children and families to access needed services.

Administer the Prevention Assessment Tool (PAT) to every youth identified as needing prevention services.

The PAT was created to assess the needs and major risk factors of at-risk youth, allowing DJJ to better individually serve them. This assessment assists in connecting youth and families to various prevention programs with the right services, in the right place, at the right time, in the right way, thus increasing the youth’s chance for success and avoiding their involvement with the juvenile justice system.

The instrument was developed and piloted in 2011-12; and, the automated version of the tool is currently under development. Once complete, the PAT will be the uniform assessment tool administered to all youth entering into DJJ prevention programs and will be used as a post-assessment to measure the impact of programs.

- Complete development of the automated PAT .......................................................... September 2013
- Administer PAT ............................................................................................................. October 2013

NOTE: Families who would like more information about programs that DJJ provides to help prevent their children from becoming involved with the juvenile justice system may access http://www.djj.state.fl.us/services/prevention/youth programs or call the Prevention Helpline at 1-866-757-0634.
Reduce the percentage of minority youth arrests and dispositions at each stage of Florida’s juvenile justice system by 5% during FY 2012-13.

Disparities exist in the racial make-up of youth that come into contact with juvenile justice authorities. Currently, minority youth are overrepresented relative to their white counterparts. This is known as Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) and represents a hurdle to the agency’s mission of providing services that strengthen families and turn around the lives of troubled youth.

There are roughly 1.83 million youth between the ages of 10-17 in Florida. Of this population, 21.4% are black. Black youth are overrepresented at every stage of judicial processing, from arrest/intake to adult court transfer.

Black females account for 22% of the female youth population in Florida. If there were no overrepresentation of black youth, black girls would account for approximately 22% of girls at all stages of the juvenile system. Rather, among girls with juvenile justice involvement, black girls account for: 42% at intake, 37% diverted, 46% detained, 40% with non-judicial dispositions, 47% with judicial dispositions, 46% placed on probation, 49% committed, and 42% transferred to adult court.

[Bar chart showing percentage of black female arrests and dispositions at each stage of Florida's juvenile justice system (2011-12)]

Black males account for 21% of the male youth population in Florida. If there were no overrepresentation of black youth, black boys would account for approximately 21% of boys at all stages of the juvenile system. Rather, among boys with juvenile justice involvement, black boys account for: 43% at intake, 34% diverted, 49% detained, 40% with non-judicial dispositions, 46% with judicial dispositions, 43% placed on probation, 53% committed, and 56% transferred to adult court.
The primary goal of the agency’s DMC initiative is to reduce the number of minority youth who come into contact with the juvenile justice system. To this end, the agency will engage in numerous efforts, as follows:

- Develop and implement a curriculum to train law enforcement, school resource officers and other officials who work with minority youth, on effective strategies to reduce DMC. .............................................................. November 2013
- Work with the State Advisory Group, Circuit Advisory Boards, and colleges and universities across the state to generate and strengthen participation among juvenile justice and community stakeholders. ................................................................. Ongoing
- Collaborate with Workforce Development and Florida Ready to Work to continue connecting underserved minority/high-risk youth with employment training programs.....August 2013
- Collaborate with schools to foster a greater understanding of diversity issues that contribute to increased disproportionate minority contact (DMC) arrest rates. ............... January 2014
- Conduct discussion groups throughout the state that enhance positive relationships between minority youth and law enforcement. ................................................................. Ongoing
- Identify DMC community liaisons that will support the agency’s goal by working to strengthen partnerships between the agency and the law enforcement community. .. January 2014
Increase awareness of prevention opportunities in all circuits during FY 2013-14 through community conversations.

DJJ is conducting a statewide prevention tour to encourage family and community activist engagement. The focus of the tour will be to share information about prevention services with parents/caregivers, families, community activists, businesses, civic organizations, and others who are working on the front lines to provide greater opportunities for Florida’s youth. Information will be provided using varied media formats and on numerous topics, such as families’ and communities’ important role in public safety, managing ungovernable youth, how parents can help their children avoid getting involved with the juvenile justice system, and where to get help.

Through the tour, DJJ’s Prevention Specialists will establish a network of those needing or willing to provide services and information, identify resources, and facilitate alliances within communities. They will also provide and support educational events, such as discussion groups and family days.

- Conduct statewide community conversations ................................................................. Ongoing
- Evaluate service gaps in needs .......................................................................................... Fall 2013
- Develop plan to address gaps .......................................................................................... January 2014
- Develop educational materials and resource lists............................................................ December 2013

Increase the involvement of the faith-based community during FY 2013-2014.

The Faith Community Network and Chaplaincy Services Program (Network) provides a full range of programs and services meant to turn around the lives of troubled youth and ensure that voluntary chaplaincy services are available to youth and their families during times of crisis. The Network’s statewide leadership team has updated the current Network strategic plan for Fiscal Years 2013-2015. The purpose of the plan is to continue to expand and enhance the Network and support the efforts to implement the components of the Roadmap. It includes the following:

- Strengthen the Statewide and Circuit Leadership Teams and expand the recruitment of Faith Partners and Volunteer Chaplains ................................................................. January 2014
  - Enhance communication and information sharing between DJJ, the Network, and other stakeholders ................................................................. January 2014
  - Plan and conduct the “Our Children, Our Future: Restoring Hope” National Faith Symposium ............................................................................ November 6, 2013
- Match the needs of children and families in the juvenile justice continuum with the services that are uniquely provided by the Network ........................................................ March 2014
  - Strengthen the collaboration among and between participants in the Network and DJJ’s initiatives ................................................................. January 2014
    - Identify, create, and implement pilot projects that support DJJ’s existing priorities such as Civil Citation, Minority Over-Representation, Alternatives to Secure Detention, Transition, and Restorative Justice .......... July 2014
  - Utilize the data captured in the PAT and Analysis of Youth’s Transition Survey to address youths’ and families’ needs ........................................ March 2014
• **Train Network participants, DJJ staff, and stakeholders on providing quality services to youth and families** ........................................................... March 2014

• **Obtain additional resources to ensure the enhancement and sustainability of the Network** September 2013

These efforts will utilize a valuable, reliable resource of caring adults who are eager to assist in the guidance and development of at-risk and delinquent youth.

**During FY 2013-2014, strengthen gender responsive strategies, programs, and services designed to keep boys and girls out of the juvenile justice system.**

Girls are a distinct population. They frequently are less of a risk to re-offend but possess a high number of needs, including trauma-informed care. Similarly, boys have risks and needs that often differ from girls. To ensure we meet the unique needs of these different populations and prevent both boys and girls from becoming system-involved, DJJ will work with subject matter experts to identify strategies, programs, and services designed to keep them out of the juvenile justice system.

• **Identify programs statewide to prevent boys and girls from entering the juvenile justice system** ............................................................................................................ Ongoing

**Provide elementary, middle, and high schools resources to prevent truancy during FY 2013-2014.**

Truancy is an early sign that youth may be headed for further trouble. It is also a signal that the youths' families may need some attention and assistance. Aside from the economic and community safety impacts of truancy, the consequences of a lack of education and potential for involvement in the juvenile justice system make this topic imperative to helping youth succeed. Youth who skip school are a concern but present an opportunity to help them see the value of an education, plan for a successful future, and make better decisions.

Extensive studies have been conducted on the contributing factors, short- and long-term consequences (quitting school, delinquency, etc.), and efforts to improve school attendance (truancy reduction programs). Many youth face overwhelming obstacles in their lives that challenge their ability to attend school. This should not result in punishment or exclusion, but allow for an opportunity for intervention. Those at risk of being a truant must also be identified and prevented from involvement in the juvenile justice system.

Whatever the situation or causes, truancy is an obvious act that calls for attention and requires efforts by educational, social, and juvenile justice systems. School-based, court-based, and DJJ-led community-based efforts must re-engage youth in school, not push them out or cause them to fall behind. School personnel, such as counselors, have the tools and expertise to deal with truant behavior and are valued partners. Since truancy may result in juvenile justice system involvement, the closer DJJ’s partnership with schools and school systems, the better, for shared research, lessons learned, and prevention initiatives.
• Work with the Department of Education, Florida Network, and other stakeholders to ensure best practices are established for dealing with truant youth.................................................. Ongoing

• Determine the feasibility of administering the Prevention Assessment Tool to truant youth and connecting them with needed resources .......................................................... Ongoing

Assess and expand mentoring opportunities throughout the continuum of services during FY 2013-2014.

DJJ knows the benefits to having pro-social adults in youths’ lives and provides a multitude of mentoring programs and opportunities across the continuum. Research has shown that mentoring is a strong protective factor aimed at keeping youth out of the juvenile justice system. Youth who have sufficient resources, exposure to extra-curricular activities, and responsible advocates are less likely to get involved in delinquent behavior. Mentoring provides guidance and nurturing in the areas of social, educational, self-awareness, financial, and family matters.

In addition to a number of contracts for mentoring providers across the state, the Volunteer Faith Network partners serve as mentors to at-risk youth through formal programs, as well as informal guidance and direction through personal relationships and interaction.

To better establish mentoring programs throughout the state and throughout its continuum of services and to support youth in their successful transition to being crime-free, DJJ will determine needs, provide resources, and encourage involvement through the following initiatives.

• Develop resource list of current programs ........................................................................... Ongoing

• Conduct a needs assessment ................................................................................................. Ongoing

• Seek funding to contract for mentoring in every circuit ......................................................... Ongoing

• Match youth in residential with a mentor throughout placement and transition

• Develop informational brochure for volunteers ................................................................. Ongoing

• Recruit volunteers ............................................................................................................... Ongoing

• Promote through social media ............................................................................................ Ongoing

A mentor is:
1. a wise and trusted counselor or teacher.
2. an influential senior sponsor or supporter.

http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/mentor?s=t noun

Synonyms are: coach, counsel, lead, mentor, pilot, shepherd, show, tutor.  http://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus/mentor

Mentoring is a brain to pick, an ear to listen, and a push in the right direction.”

John Crosby
Goal: Divert More Youth from Involvement with the Juvenile Justice System

Youth who commit minor offenses can receive alternative sanctions that still hold them accountable for their actions. If they are not arrested, they can receive a civil citation and be diverted from the juvenile justice system without a formal arrest record. If they are arrested, DJJ can recommend a program to divert them from further involvement in the juvenile justice system but still impose sanctions and provide services.

Increase the number of youth issued a civil citation during FY 2012-2013 by 20% (from 6,964 in FY 2011-12 to 8,357).

Many youth who are arrested have committed minor, first-time misdemeanor offenses. Their behavior can be characterized as youthful indiscretion and include offenses such as vandalism,
misdemeanor drug possession, disorderly conduct, or misdemeanor battery. They will likely outgrow their poor behavior choices, with little or no intervention required by the juvenile justice system, as they develop better reasoning, judgment, and decision making skills. Youth should be held accountable for their actions but in a way that will increase their opportunity to become successful adults. Civil Citation is an appropriate alternative to arrest.

The juvenile Civil Citation process diverts these youth from formal arrest, avoids them having an arrest record, and effectively discourages future offending. Youths’ needs are assessed, and they are given appropriate sanctions and services, such as restitution, victim awareness and accountability (including letters of apology), community service, anger management classes, and counseling. The use of Civil Citation holds youth immediately accountable for their poor behavior without limiting their long-term prospects to become productive citizens. A criminal record resulting from an arrest can harm their future educational, employment, and military service involvement. Even cases that are formally processed but diverted or dismissed can hinder future opportunities. However, if sanctions are not completed successfully, these youth will be processed through the formal juvenile justice system.

A five-year analysis shows that two-thirds of youth arrested for a first-time misdemeanor are not arrested again during an 18-month follow up period. Most of these youth are not at risk of becoming chronic or serious offenders. As illustrated in the following chart, youth who receive a civil citation and are diverted from entering DJJ have very low rates for subsequent offenses.

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The best way to impact recidivism is to reach youth before they enter the system. In addition, for those who need residential placement, it is critical that they get the targeted services they need to address issues that will impact their risk to re-offend.

Furthermore, arrests for first-time misdemeanors are costly to taxpayers. According to the American Bar Association, each such arrest costs approximately $5,000 to process a youth in the juvenile justice system (court costs; salaries for law enforcement, judges, public defenders, state attorneys and support staff; etc.). Civil Citation costs only $386 on average per case.\(^2\)

Prior to 2011, Civil Citation was a diversion option available at the local level. In 2011, the Legislature revised the Civil Citation statute to require each community to provide Civil Citation or other similar diversion opportunities. As communities move forward to meet these requirements, DJJ will encourage and assist with development of Civil Citation initiatives. In FY 2011-12, the first full year of the initiative, Civil Citation opportunities were available in most counties, and 25% of eligible youth (6,964 first-time misdemeanants) were issued a civil citation. The number of youth receiving civil citations in FY 2012-13 was nearly 7,300 (based on preliminary year-end analysis). Although the Civil Citation process is available for most juveniles throughout Florida and is being used more, it is still currently underutilized.

The following chart reflects the number of first time misdemeanor youth and the number of those youth who received a civil citation.

Civil Citation and other diversion options should be provided equally to all who qualify. Special attention needs to be paid when deciding whether to divert specific populations (black youth, girls, or the disabled). Blacks are over-represented at every stage of the juvenile justice system, and the disabled and girls have special needs that may result in behavior that seems defiant. In fact, girls often have experienced a great deal of trauma in their lives and it is important that everyone who interacts with them, including all staff, school personnel, and law enforcement officers has a basic understanding of trauma reactions and avoid inadvertently escalating youth when they are attempting to calm them. Simple actions can decrease the escalation and can help prevent youth from unnecessarily becoming involved in the juvenile justice system.

DJJ will continue to reach out to its partners throughout the state to promote the process and gain the essential support needed. The Civil Citation process will be enhanced by the following:

- Invest a portion of funds shifted from the reduced residential bed capacity and contracting with local providers to provide services to Civil Citation youth ......................... Ongoing
- Provide appropriate services to youth and family when a mental health, substance abuse or a family-related problem is the underlying cause of the offense ......................... Ongoing
- Promote the process to courts, law enforcement, and prosecutors. This year, DJJ will continue to work with a strategic planner provided by the Eckerd Family Foundation to focus on three counties (Escambia, Duval, and Orange) targeting their high number of eligible youth not served by Civil Citation ................................................................. Ongoing
  - Assist Escambia County’s expansion of their school-based Civil Citation to youth countywide from 0% to 16%. ..................................................................................................................Complete
  - Assist Duval County to serve 31% of Civil Citation youth through Neighborhood Accountability Boards (an increase from 4%). ...........................................................................................................Complete
- Participate in statewide conferences and meetings to build support for Civil Citation and train stakeholders on the Civil Citation process. ..................................................... Ongoing
  - To date, Civil Citation has been included in discussions at the Florida Association of Teen Courts annual meeting and the Florida Police Chiefs Association midwinter training conference.
- Monitor utilization of Civil Citation use by counties as well as the intersection between race and gender for similar offenses ................................................................. Ongoing
- Promote the appropriate and increased use of Civil Citations to reduce the number of minority youth formally entering the juvenile justice system. ..............................................Ongoing
- Increase efforts to educate law enforcement officials on the differences between youth and adults.
  - Participate on the Florida Department of Law Enforcement’s curriculum revision team ..................................................................................................................2013 - 2014
  - Provide training on adolescent development and the teenage brain ......................... Ongoing
  - Share best practices through presentations at law enforcement conferences and site visits................................................................. Ongoing
Prevention and Diversion through Education Efforts

The number of all Florida youth arrested at school dropped by 50 percent between FY 2004-05 and FY 2011-12. These figures correspond to a downward trend in juvenile delinquency in all categories across the state and across the nation. While this movement is in the right direction, there are still too many unnecessary school arrests.

Too often youth who act up at school are referred to DJJ for “punishment,” forcing the youth to enter the juvenile justice system needlessly instead of being diverted to more productive alternative sanctions. In fact, for FY 2011-12, 67% of school-related arrests were for misdemeanors.

Furthermore, the majority of both felony and misdemeanor school-related arrests were disposed through diversion, dismissal, non-files, or other outcomes. A small percentage was disposed to probation, residential commitment, or adult court.
Therefore, DJJ will collaborate with schools to ensure Civil Citation is utilized, where appropriate, so the best outcomes are achieved through appropriate sanctions and services for students.

**Reduce the number of school-related arrests by 10% (from 13,870 in FY 2011-2012 to 12,483 in FY 2012-2013).**

In addition to working with schools to educate them on the majority of arrests that are not necessary, there are many ways in which DJJ helps reduce the number of school arrests. We will work further to stem the so-called “school to prison pipeline” by:

- Supporting family involvement
- Being more involved in schools and positively influencing a youth’s educational success
- Ensuring there is not an overrepresentation of school arrests of minorities and youth with disabilities.
- Encourage expansion of vocational opportunities at school for youth that give them hope for the future and set them up for employability.

JPO staff will work closely with school personnel to ensure referrals are made appropriately and vocational opportunities exist. They will also work closely with families to help them support their children’s education. As a resource at schools and families, JPOs will collaborate to better serve at-risk youth.

**Family Education and Involvement**

Families are critical to ensuring their children are attending school and working toward a high school diploma, vocational certification, or college degree. To assist families in supporting their children’s education, DJJ is developing informational materials to keep families informed and encourage their involvement. The resources will explain the value of the various educational opportunities, including types of diplomas and various trade programs; GED test preparation tips; market data on job pay and hiring statistics; and how staying in school leads to better outcomes and lessens the chance of their child ending up deeper in the juvenile justice or adult correctional systems. These resources will supplement the interactions JPOs will have with families.

- Create educational materials for families, as well as a plan for distribution and updates.................................................................................................................. April - August 2013
JPOs in the Schools

Analysts from the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and the Department of Education (DOE) examined 12,520 youth who received a school-related arrest during FY 2011-12 to determine the extent to which certain behaviors or statuses affect delinquency in schools. DOE analysts were able to match 9,145 of these youth to education status and discipline records. The results indicated that, for the youth for whom this information was available, a large percentage of youth who received a school-related delinquency arrest have a history of truancy or suspension. Smaller proportions of these youth were identified in an Exceptional Student Education (ESE) status or were previously expelled from school.

To prevent poor behavior, provide an extra school resource, and lessen school arrests, DJJ will engage in several initiatives. These efforts will include having JPOs located in offices at schools to meet with youth, lead groups, and collaborate with School Resource Officers (SROs). JPOs are knowledgeable about available community resources, and they also are knowledgeable about the history, risks, and needs of at-risk and delinquent youth. JPOs will provide on-site services and assist youth in getting to their court hearings.

Palm Beach County Pilot Project

To establish the effectiveness of locating JPOs in schools, DJJ has begun a pilot project through a partnership with Palm Beach County Schools. One JPO and one school staff member are providing academic and behavioral oversight for youth in the juvenile justice system who attend Palm Beach Lakes High School, the school with the highest arrest rate in that county. The two-member team:

1. Works directly with youth and families, school personnel, law enforcement, and the courts to monitor youth’s progress.
2. Provides comprehensive case management services to help increase educational success.
3. Participates in school-related discipline and/or law enforcement referrals, working jointly to apply the most appropriate services, alternatives, progressive responses, and/or sanctions.

4. Assists with the coordination of services and compliance with court-ordered sanctions.

5. Communicates with school district partners to deliver the highest level of services to youth in the community.

6. Conducts home visits and makes other contacts.

7. Assists with transition, diversion, and pending cases.

Increased Involvement by JPOs

JPOs with offices located outside of schools will continue to make school visits, as appropriate, and serve as resources to school personnel. Their expanded school involvement role is highlighted in the updated 2013 JPO position description (see section under Improve Staff Skills). They will work to establish better partnerships with school personnel, particularly School Resource Officers. Their presence in local schools and the communities will help facilitate better communication and participation in the educational process with youth under community probation supervision.

In-school Suspension Pilot Project

Under consideration is another pilot program which will place JPOs in schools that have above-average out-of-school suspension numbers. Based on an identified interest and need, DJJ is considering utilizing DJJ JPO staff to facilitate the LifeSkills Training (LST) evidence-based delinquency intervention or other research-based interventions, on topics such as anger management, during an alternative in-school suspension (ISS). The goal of this initiative would be to reduce both in- and out-of-school suspensions.

- Conduct pilot project with JPOs located at Palm Beach Lakes High School to reduce school-based arrests and out-of-school suspensions by 25%.
  - Begun ............................................................................................................ Complete
  - Evaluate ......................................................................................................... June 2013
  - Revise; expand .............................................................................................. December 2013
- Expand the role of all JPOs to include increased school involvement.................. Completed
- Assess potential outcomes of an ISS pilot facilitated by JPOs................................. August 2013
  - Determine if target school districts have interest in an ISS pilot......................... August 2013
  - Develop ISS pilot plan and obtain schools districts’ approval.............................. June 2014
  - Implement ISS pilot ......................................................................................... Third 9-Week Period of the School Year 2014
  - Evaluate ISS pilot ............................................................................................ May 2014
Over-representation of School Arrests for Minorities and Youth with Disabilities

Minority students and those with disabilities were arrested at more than double the rate of other youth. Black youth accounted for 47 percent of all school-related arrests, although they represent 21 percent of Florida youth aged 10 to 17. Further, they were more likely to have their cases ultimately dismissed than their white counterparts. Exceptional Student Education (ESE) students accounted for 29 percent of school arrests, although they represent 18.5 percent of Florida public school students.

- Examine the disparity in school based arrests for minority youth .................................................. Complete
  - Develop a strategic data-based approach and coordinate a pilot project with the DJJ Disproportionate Minority Contact Liaison .................................................. Ongoing
- Examine the higher rates of arrest for students with disabilities by geographical area ..........June 2013
  - Work with the ESE Department at DOE to develop tools and technical assistance to those school districts .................................................. Ongoing
  - Conduct a data review with school districts .................................................. Ongoing

Vocational Opportunities for Youth

(See section under Provide Optimal Services goal.)

Identify and provide services for at-risk and delinquent children younger than 12 years old.

DJJ works to prevent further and future delinquency and connect youth and families to community-based resources to help meet their needs. We also recognize that we must address at-risk and delinquent behavior at the earliest onset and give those youth and families the tools and services they need based on thorough assessments. In particular, DJJ is compelled to examine a particular population, those youth who are 12 years old or younger. Early onset of delinquency tends to predict a long and serious criminal career.

- In FY 2009-10 over 50% of DJJ’s serious, violent, and chronic offenders were 12 or under at the first age of offense.
- In 2012 there were 1,572 youth ages 12 and under arrested in Florida. So, Prevention programming is only one aspect of services needed for this younger population.
- Studies show that there are typically 7 years of warning signs before a troubled child may become a serious, violent offender.
- “Research shows that detaining large numbers of youth, particularly younger delinquents, may actually prolong delinquency that might otherwise end and can diminish the likelihood that young people will find a place in law-abiding society.”

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Due to the clear negative path for these children, we must determine what unique services or treatment will protect such young lives from being so adversely affected. DJJ will consult with national experts to determine whether there are existing best or promising practices for this group. We also will seek information as to whether there are unique characteristics of this younger population, particular warning signs, and risk factors, such as acting impulsively, poor social competencies, uncontrolled anger, or lack of problem solving skills.

- Research ways to identify and prevent children younger than 12 becoming delinquent ........... Ongoing
- Consider proposing a legislative budget request for family-focused, early intervention programs..2014

**Divert 10% more youth from court during FY 2012-13 than FY 2011-12 (from 24,284 to 26,712).**

Once referred to DJJ, all youth receive screening and assessment, and DJJ provides a recommendation to the state attorney regarding appropriate handling cases. DJJ's recommendation includes sanctions and services for youth. When making a recommendation, DJJ has several options that divert youth from further involvement with the formal juvenile justice system and allow them to remain in their home and community. Alternative diversion programs offer an array of services such as community arbitration; oversight of community service and restitution collection; drug assessments; counseling; case management; education, therapeutic, and supportive services; Teen Court; Drug Court; and mentoring programs. We will work with state attorneys to review current alternatives and identify additional meaningful and appropriate alternatives. These alternatives will include community based diversion and intervention options in the least restrictive setting that are strength-based and gender responsive and hold youth accountable. Efforts will include addressing the uniqueness of each individual (age, gender, risks, needs, etc.).

- Increase discussions with state attorneys .................................................................................. Ongoing
- Expand non-residential, community-based diversion options for appropriate youth .......... Ongoing

“DJJ is committed to community partnerships that help youth change their behaviors and improve their chance of success. The agency’s Roadmap to System Excellence places a deliberate focus on diverting youth from the justice system – an ambitious but attainable and worthwhile goal.”

Stephen Bardy, executive director, Children’s Home Society of Florida, Palm Beach County
Goal: Use Secure Detention Only When Necessary

Unnecessary use of secure detention is costly and inappropriate. Secure detention is suitable for some DJJ youth but is not appropriate for the majority of them. Many Florida communities can meet the needs of their at-risk youth safely without this most restrictive option. By addressing youth needs in the community, an opportunity exists to decrease the number of youth admitted to secure detention, be fiscally responsible, and realize better outcomes for youth.

The purpose of secure detention is to provide a safe place for youth who are a risk to public safety or who may not show up for their scheduled court dates. If they are not a risk for either situation, alternatives, such as home detention, electronic monitoring, and respite care—which allow them to remain in their homes and in their communities—should be considered. The unique needs and risks of each youth always must be carefully evaluated to make the most appropriate decisions. Public safety must be ensured, and alternatives must provide immediate accountability and be age appropriate and gender responsive.

Secure detention poses a substantial cost burden for both the state and counties. With a cost of approximately $300 per calendar day and $600 for an overnight stay per youth, these funds could be better utilized elsewhere in the juvenile justice system.

Secure detention should not be used as a punishment under any circumstances, regardless if there has been a finding of delinquency (guilt). When detention is used inappropriately, it can cause a number of negative unintended consequences.

- Secure detention is associated with increased recidivism, not deterring youth from crime.\(^6\)
- Detention has been shown to interrupt the natural process of “aging out” (youth are less likely to commit crime as they get older).\(^7\) Instead, detention negatively interferes with community, family, school and employment participation, all of which have been shown to help youth “age out” of crime.
- “The data … show that reductions in detention do not lead to expected increases in delinquency; rather detention reductions often lead to juvenile delinquency reductions and lower costs.”\(^8\)
- “Most importantly, for a variety of reasons to be explored, there is credible and significant research that suggests that the experience of detention may make it more likely that youth will continue to engage in delinquent behavior, and that the detention experience may increase the odds that youth will recidivate, further compromising public safety.”\(^9\)

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Secure detention can be used inappropriately when youth are detained for missing a court date—which may have been out of their control—or for being non-compliant with an aspect of their probation, such as missing curfew because their car had broken down. Effective, progressive incentives (actions or rewards used to reinforce positive behavior) and sanctions can help youth succeed, instead of pushing them further into the system through unnecessary secure detention.

To ensure that secure detention is used only when necessary, DJJ participates in the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI). This is a comprehensive reform program that helps the agency make data-driven decisions, safely reduce unnecessary detention, and ensure that youth are supervised in the right place, at the right time, and with the right combination of supervision, services, and sanctions. JDAI provides a time-tested framework and is a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation that has been successfully implemented in more than 150 jurisdictions across the country. While local JDAI efforts are being piloted in five Florida circuits (4, 6, 13, 15 and 17), DJJ also is conducting detention reform at the state level. (NOTE: A map of Florida judicial circuits can be found on the final page of this document.)

**Decrease the number of youth who are a low risk to re-offend and placed in secure detention by 5% during FY 2012-13 through continued expansion of alternatives to secure detention.** *(More than 30% of youth stay less than 48 hours in detention — at a cost of $600 each which could have been better spent elsewhere.)*

DJJ must continually seek alternatives to secure detention that are evidence-based or research-supported and that effectively protect the public, appropriately hold youth accountable, and successfully support the rehabilitation of youth. The broader the options but more individualized the services, the better. Alternatives must be available in all areas of the state and meet the needs of each community and its youth and families. In particular, the number of low-risk youth in secure detention will be reduced through increasing communication and collaboration with schools as described in the previous section. It will also be reduced through expanding Neighborhood Accountability Boards, adjusting scoring to the DRAI, establishing evening reporting centers, providing respite beds, and increasing the usage of electronic monitoring units.

- **Neighborhood Accountability Boards (NABs)** are restorative justice models with resources in place to support at-risk juvenile justice-involved youth and their families. They are made up of community volunteers who gather as a panel to hear from youth who have been diverted pre- or post-adjudication. The NAB reviews the youth’s case, discusses the case with the youth, and decides a restoration plan. NABs are not sanction-oriented (punishment) but instead embrace a balanced approach (public safety, accountability to the victim, and competency development for the youth) to interventions.
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Their existence and role in communities will be assessed and developed or expanded as DJJ strives to serve more youth and their families. Encouraged community ownership of NABs will help identify and provide diverse interventions and prevention services.

- **Assess existence and role of NABs** ................................................................. November 2013
  - Expand the role of NABs to include supervision and intervention services to youth participating in prevention and diversion programming, as well as youth on probation that are having difficulties under supervision
  - Consider engaging NABs during the intake process to help identify and filter appropriate services to youth and families, assist with resources for supervision plans, and provide input for recommendations (PDRs)

- **Conduct an assessment to determine what communities would benefit from having a NAB** .................................................................................................................. November 2013

**DRAI scoring adjustment** -- To further explore alternatives to detention, the juvenile assessment centers in Miami-Dade, Hillsborough, and Alachua counties are participating in a pilot project which adjusts the scoring of underlying offenses. An underlying offense is one for which the youth is currently on any form of supervision (probation, home detention, non-secure detention, conditional release, post-commitment probation, or commitment status). Currently, youth arrested for offense(s) that are not detainable are scored on their most serious underlying offense, no matter how long ago they were placed on a supervision status for that underlying offense. In the pilot, screeners will only score for the underlying offense within the first:

  - Year of the youth’s placement for a violent offense, or
  - Ninety (90) days for non-violent offenses.

Pilot testing in Alachua and Miami-Dade was evaluated in April 2013. Pilot data reflected the need to add an intensive monitoring component for those youth released under pilot guidelines. In May 2013, the decision was made to continue the pilot in Hillsborough County and to expand the pilot to all JDAI sites, which include Duval, Pinellas, Palm Beach, and Broward counties. Intensive monitoring will be required for all youth released under the pilot guidelines.

  - **Conduct initial pilot testing in Alachua and Miami-Dade Counties** .................. Completed
  - **Continue pilot testing in Hillsborough County and begin pilot testing in Duval, Pinellas, Palm Beach, and Broward Counties (all with added intensive monitoring)** ................................................................. September - November, 2013
  - **Review and conduct analysis of pilot testing** .................................................. December, 2013
  - **Establish permanent scoring revision in all JDAI sites: Duval, Pinellas, Palm Beach, and Broward Counties** ................................................................. January 2014

**Evening Reporting Centers** -- As part of the JDAI initiative, Palm Beach and Hillsborough counties are pursuing evening reporting centers as an alternative to secure detention. Youth under court supervision can reside at home, attend school, and receive education...
on life skills, anger management, nutrition, money management, parenting, etc. during evenings at the centers. These centers provide safe community places for youth to go after school and can also be opportunities for pro-social activities, such as cultural arts.

- Open first evening youth reporting center in West Palm Beach....................... October 2013
- Expand to Hillsborough County........................................................................December 2013

**Respite beds and family services for youth charged solely with misdemeanor domestic violence** - (Almost 4,000 youth are in secure detention per year—nearly 30,000 days—solely because they had a misdemeanor domestic violence offense and had no other place to go.) Often youth with domestic violence charges have underlying issues such as substance abuse, violence in the home, or other risk factors that must be addressed. Community safety can still be assured and the negative consequences of secure detention can be avoided if an alternative setting can be found for youth that allows a “cooling off” period and family intervention, if needed.

An alternative to secure detention contract was executed to The Florida Network on January 22, 2013, to provide management and administrative oversight of a respite care services program for youth 10 to 18 years of age who have been charged with an offense of domestic violence (including youth who have been previously adjudicated for other issues). This statewide program provides community-based services for 23 respite care beds (3450 bed care days annually) within Brevard, Hillsborough, Duval, St. Johns, Clay, Nassau, Orange, Seminole, Osceola, Palm Beach and Broward counties. While in respite care, youth receive services that include 24-hour awake supervision, assessment, orientation, case management, medical and mental health services, education, religious/spiritual opportunities, recreational and leisure time activities, community involvement opportunities, and transportation. As of June 1, 2013, 160 youth have received services.

- Utilize Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) for respite services .................................. Completed
- Make beds available............................................................................................... Completed
- Utilize current community-based respite care service providers for youth charged with misdemeanor domestic violence offenses.................................................. Ongoing
- Conduct monitoring of respite care placements to ensure appropriate utilization..Ongoing
- Evaluate the need for additional community-based respite care resources for youth charged with domestic violence offenses.................................................. October 2013

**Electronic monitoring (EM)** was implemented statewide in January 2012 as a community-based alternative to secure detention. DJJ utilizes EM as an alternative for youth pending disposition, a progressive response for youth on court-ordered supervision, and an alternative to secure detention for youth who have been committed and are awaiting placement in a DJJ residential facility. Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) devices alert the contracted monitoring company (and then the JPO, as
appropriate), when youth are not complying with restrictions to their movements, such as leaving home other than to attend school. This type of alternative is cost-effective while providing the supervision necessary to ensure community safety.

During FY 2012-2013, DJJ improved its oversight of the program by:

- Conducting a case-by-case review to ensure all youth wearing an EM device have a zone and schedule entered into the provider management database.
- Amending DJJ’s EM policy and issuing a joint EM directive to create a lockdown schedule for all youth placed on EM at the regional juvenile detention centers; require JPOs to enter youth’s schedules and zone information, including inclusion and exclusion zones, within 24-hours of the youth’s placement on EM; and cancel any local agreements between the Detention and Probation program areas.
- Conducting on-site training and multiple regional webinars as a refresher for Detention/Probation staff.
- Creating a new management report that includes:
  - Youth name (first and last) and DJJ ID#
  - Date and time of EM activation
  - Name of officer (Detention or Probation) that initially activated the EM device
  - Whether or not an EM lock-down schedule was created
  - Date, time, and name of JPO that made any change to the EM schedule
- Creating a default zone and 24/7 lock-down schedule. NOTE: this prevents staff from being able to activate the EM unit until they first create a zone and lock-down schedule.

EM utilization and effectiveness will remain on ongoing initiative.

- **Increase from 170 units average daily usage in FY 2011-2012 to 213 in FY 2012-2013..........................................................Increased to 200**
- **Identify underutilization areas and availability of units ...........................................Ongoing**
- **Promote the effectiveness of EM as an alternative to secure detention to judicial and other juvenile justice stakeholders .................................................................Ongoing**
- **Increase EM utilization from 200 average daily usage in FY 2012-2013 to 230 in FY 2013-2014.................................................................June 30, 2014**
- **Conduct training and technical assistance for Detention and Probation staff .......... Ongoing**
Increase identification of victims of human trafficking and connect them to appropriate services by establishing three pilot sites by January 2013 and conducting training during 2013-2014.

Human Trafficking is a form of modern day slavery and is the fastest growing criminal enterprise in the world today.\textsuperscript{10} As Chair of the Human Trafficking Workgroup of the Florida and Children Youth Cabinet, Secretary Walters is spearheading a comprehensive, collaborative, cross-agency approach to protect Florida’s children from the emotional, physical, and psychological harm human trafficking causes.

1,266 Human Trafficking Cases Investigated by DCF
717 Potential Victims in the DJJ System
Over ½ Interacted with DJJ Before Being Reported to the Child Abuse Hotline
Most Arrested for Theft or Assault
(4% for Prostitution or Related Sex Offenses)

DJJ is embarking on several initiatives that will support two 2012 laws. The legislation assists human trafficking victims by allowing them to get help from child welfare professionals instead of being placed in juvenile justice system and imposes tougher sentences on perpetrators. Florida is the first state in the nation to attempt to identify juvenile victims upon arrest which enables DJJ to save children from the cruel individuals subjecting them to trafficking and connect victims with state resources they need to recover from the trauma they experienced and move forward.

- Implement the child sex trafficking victim identification pilot project in the three counties with the highest incidence of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)
  - Broward County........................................................................................................... Completed
  - Miami-Dade County........................................................................................................ Completed
  - Orange County................................................................................................................. Completed

- Train all DJJ detention and probation staff, along with community partners such as law enforcement and service providers
  - Statewide Human Trafficking Summit ................................................................. September 2013
  - Module in DJJ officer academies ................................................................................December 2013
  - Florida Network Symposium ...................................................................................... Completed

• Update the intake process at three detention centers to include questions to identify victims of all forms of human trafficking and steps to follow for suspected and/or confirmed victims throughout the continuum of juvenile justice services, including their transition
  ○ Bay County .....................................................................................................................................July 2013
  ○ Miami-Dade County ............................................................................................................................July 2013
  ○ Duval County ......................................................................................................................................July 2013

• Create a comprehensive procedure for victim identification and collaboration with DCF to ensure appropriate services are provided ........................................... October/November 2013

Decrease the number of youth admitted into secure detention for Failure to Appear by 15% during FY 2012-13 (from 5,058 in 2011-12 to 4,299).

Secure detention stays by youth who fail to show up for their court date will be reduced through the following initiatives.

• Auto-dialers - The auto-dialer system reminds youth of pending court dates and has been installed in detention centers in every county except Palm Beach (see Expeditors below) and Monroe. During FY 2011-12, 16,458 calls were made from auto-dialer systems in secure detention.
  ○ Assess effect ...................................................................................................................................... Ongoing

• Expeditors - Palm Beach County uses individuals to directly contact youth regarding their court date instead of an auto-dialer system.
  ○ Assess effect ...................................................................................................................................... Ongoing

• Transportation - Transportation is often cited by youth, parents, and staff as a much-needed community resource. Without reliable transportation youth are hindered from attending court hearings and counseling sessions and participating in community service, etc. As a result, many youth end up violating the terms and conditions of their court-ordered supervision. To address this concern, DJJ is identifying transportation options for youth and families. Options will vary from community to community based on need and available resources.
  ○ Transfer vans from Detention and Residential Services to Probation ........................................... Completed
  ○ Create plan to support transportation efforts ...................................................................................... Completed (see below)

• Collaboration with juvenile judges - In March 2013, each of the 20 circuit probation offices developed a plan with their local judicial partners to reduce the number of youth detained in secure detention as a result of a Failure to Appear (FTA). Specific elements of the local plans vary but include the following:
  1. A 48-hour window to locate youth and family prior to issuing an FTA warrant.
     Note: There is some deviation in timeframes from circuit to circuit (i.e. 24-hours, one business day, case-by-case basis)
2. Actions of the JPO to locate youth and family, to include, but are not limited to: calling a parent at work, driving by the home, contacting the youth's school, etc.

3. What the JPO will do once contact is made

4. What to do if contact isn’t made

5. Documentation of the specific steps taken to locate the youth and family

   - Develop circuit FTA plans ................................................................. Completed
   - Evaluate circuit FTA plans................................................................. Completed
   - Conduct ongoing analysis and monitoring of FTA data ...................... Ongoing

**Decrease the number of youth admitted into secure detention for Violations of Probation by 15% during FY 2012-13 (from 2,049 in 2011-12 to 1,742).**

DJJ has developed a more uniform Effective Response System that is intended to minimize the number of youth admitted to secure detention solely on a technical violation of probation. This strategy ensures that all appropriate responses to noncompliance with court-ordered sanctions are considered before a formal violation is filed with the court. The responses may include, but are not limited to, additional community service hours, more restrictive curfews, placement on electronic monitoring, random urinalysis, and counseling services. In addition, this improved system provides the JPO with a menu of options to encourage completion of sanctions, including incentives to recognize and reinforce positive behavior.

- **Develop the effective response system** ............................................................................................................ Completed
- **Implement the effective response system statewide** ......................................................................................... Completed
- **Meet with law enforcement partners and provide training on the Effective Response System** ..................... January 2014
- **Examine the frequency and causes of both boys and girls committing violations of probation to ensure the Effective Response System is gender-responsive** .......................................................... January 2014 - July 1, 2014

Youth who commit violations of probation that do not result in new charges receive instant, individualized, increased sanctions determined by the JPO. Although only about 1% of delinquent youth are chronic misdemeanants, this still represents approximately 3,134 youth over five years. Since they have the potential to escalate in their misbehaviors and consume a great deal of resources, youth who commit chronic misbehaviors may need to be dealt with in a more structured way. DJJ will determine if there is a need to develop clearer standards to the number of violations of chronic misdemeanors and consider a strategy to determine which behaviors may trigger admission to a program or secure detention.

- **Partner with law enforcement to provide appropriate supervision of those youth on home detention, committed pending placement, chronic misdemeanants, and those at highest risk to re-offend** .......................................................................................... Ongoing
Goal: Provide Optimal Service Environments

For youth deemed appropriate for secure detention, residential placement, or any juvenile justice program or service, DJJ must provide an environment that is safe and secure. We also must provide services focused on individual needs and rehabilitation of youth. Our services must offer evidence-based or promising practices for interventions; including training on life skills, dealing with change; engaging families; and providing gender responsive and trauma-informed practices, vocational opportunities, and effective behavioral management systems. DJJ youth must also have appropriate places to assess youth and support their progress. All efforts must be geared toward rehabilitating youth and reuniting them successfully back into healthy families and supportive communities.

Assess and improve the quality of evidence-based service delivery and promising delinquency interventions by July 1, 2014.

A challenge for DJJ is to ensure that programs, services, interventions, and policies are effective and provided or developed according to the most current research. Quality service delivery is critical to the success of our youth. DJJ cannot simply provide services; proof of effectiveness is necessary.

DJJ has recently implemented an Interventions Tracking Module in the Juvenile Justice Information System statewide database. The module will track which youth receive which evidence-based and promising delinquency interventions. Data collected will allow DJJ to determine whether youth are receiving the correct amount and length of delinquency interventions. The need to track delinquency interventions provided in our programs was a specific recommendation outlined in a study conducted by Florida State University regarding the validity of the Residential Positive Achievement Change Tool (R-PACT). The R-PACT is a survey instrument used by DJJ to identify youths’ criminogenic needs, guide the development of intervention strategies, and assess youth progress.11

Also, DJJ has begun to incorporate the Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP) as part of the overall Quality Improvement process throughout the continuum of services. The SPEP is an evaluation tool that identifies shortcomings in juvenile programs or services, specifically delinquency intervention services. The SPEP evaluates how closely delinquency interventions, as provided, align with the best criminological and psychological research in the field. Furthermore, the SPEP helps identify concrete recommendations for improvement in order to optimize intervention effectiveness and positive outcomes. The SPEP evaluates:

- Service Type (e.g., cognitive behavioral; group counseling)

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- Service Quantity/Dosage (duration and intensity of contact hours)
- Service Quality (e.g., written protocols/manuals; training; fidelity monitoring; corrective action)
- Juvenile Characteristics (e.g., gender, race, risk to re-offend; level of youth served)

Technical assistance based upon recommendations from the annual Quality Improvement Review and SPEP assessment is also provided.

The Quality Improvement process is the cornerstone by which DJJ better provides the right service, to the right youth, at the right time, in the right way. Measuring outcomes is the key to successful service delivery, and it results in accountability, implementation consistency, the ability to address problems early, and improved results.

- **Begin tracking interventions** .................................................................July 2013
- **Analyze six months’ of data** ................................................................. January 2014
- **Identify opportunities for improvements** ...........................................February 2014
- **Implement improvements** .................................................................April 2014

**Enhance the effective strategies used to assist youth through the “stages of change.”**

Motivational Interviewing (MI) training provides staff with effective communication strategies to use when interacting with youth. These strategies focus on reducing resistance, are non-confrontational, and result in less escalation. MI teaches staff to produce positive youth behavior by enhancing youths’ motivation and encouraging them to take responsibility for their own actions. The effectiveness of interventions is best when youth are prepared for change. A foundation of MI is the Stages of Change, a process by which individuals go through stages of readiness when changing any behavior. Interactions and interventions with youth are designed to assist them through these stages of, or steps to, change. This supports the continuous improvement model by ensuring that the right services are provided, to the right youth, at the right time, and in the right way.

To continue enhancing youth behavior change, DJJ will:

- **Implement the DJJ Basics of MI and the Stages of Change curriculum into the juvenile probation and detention officer academies** ................................................................. Completed
- **Develop a standardized MI technical assistance coaching process** ................................. Completed
  This process is designed for supervisors to coach staff on effective use of MI skills with youth in a variety of settings.
- **Conduct MI booster trainings with MI qualified trainers** .............................................. Ongoing
- **Train additional MI qualified trainers** .............................................................. Complete & Ongoing
Ensure daily life skills training is conducted at all secure detention centers by December 31, 2013.

Even though youth are in secure detention for a short time, it is used to begin the rehabilitation process. We take advantage of every opportunity to help them to learn better coping and decision making skills. Detention centers conduct approximately 500 life skills groups per month. Topics include, but are not limited to: home management skills, fictional problems, career planning, personal hygiene, parenting, and Shaken Baby Syndrome. By providing a trauma-informed environment, along with life skills groups, secure detention is the first step in preventing future law violations.

- Assess (and expand if necessary) life skills groups at all secure detention facilities. ................................................................. December 31, 2013
- Deliver life skills groups at all Youth Reporting Centers .............................................. December 31, 2013
- Assess (and expand if necessary) life skills groups at all residential facilities......... December 31, 2013

Increase family engagement efforts throughout the continuum during FY 2013-2014 to encourage youth success.

A family, “the people in a youth’s life who can offer ongoing positive support,” is the most important influence on a child’s life. They provide for basic needs; help establish a sense of identity; and set parameters for what is right and wrong, success and failure, and good and bad. Families have a profound effect on what their child learns and who he/she becomes.

For children who enter the juvenile justice system, families can share a wealth of knowledge about their child’s development, assist in determining the best treatment and services for them, identify needs of their own that could positively affect the whole family, and provide guidance and hope after their child leaves DJJ. Thus, DJJ is committed to establishing a culture where family engagement is found in all of its policies and practices in order to strengthen both families and their children; improve prevention, intervention, and treatment services; and increase public safety.

The juvenile justice system can in no way take the place of a family, but it can provide effective assessments and appropriate provision of needs and services. It can be even more effective when it works alongside the family, as a team. Children and their families must be strengthened and empowered so that when children return home they are successful in their home and community environments.

Research shows that:

- “Youth identify families as their most important source of support.” 12

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“Parents have special knowledge that can enhance the design of interventions and treatments.”

“Parents can promote healthy development, can prevent problems from developing or exacerbating, and can implement effective treatment protocols and educational interventions.”

“Outcomes improve when family and youth are active participants in their own treatment, particularly when youth and families are given leadership roles in making treatment decisions.”

“Family involvement is a critical aspect of work aimed at improving the lives of children. Research and experience in education, mental health and medicine suggests that the level of family engagement and empowerment plays a key role in initiating and sustaining use of services, in increasing family satisfaction with and commitment to services and improving child outcomes. Families are also more likely to participate in the treatment process and follow through on recommendation if they feel included in the decision-making process.”

DJJ will promote a culture where families are engaged in the juvenile justice process, involved in decision making, and empowered to solve their own problems. This will be achieved by understanding, respecting, involving, and supporting the families it serves. For example, DJJ will improve its efforts to connect families to prevention services, educate them on available resources, get them involved in case and treatment plans, and assist them with planning as their children return home from residential commitment.

Through these strategies, DJJ will treat families as helpful change agents whose knowledge, skills, and abilities can be used to achieve and sustain long-term success for their child. Ultimately, engaging with families will prevent youth from entering the system, going deeper in it, or recidivating; support successful re-entry; and keep them and communities safer. DJJ is thoroughly committed to providing meaningful family engagement.

- Develop a family engagement policy ......................................................................................................................June 2013
- Create a State Advisory Group sub-committee ......................................................................................................July 2014
- Conduct surveys
  - Family needs .......................................................................................................................................................Completed
  - Staff attitudes .......................................................................................................................................................Completed
  - Family satisfaction ..................................................................................................................................................July 2013

16 Georgetown Center for Human Development (2012)
• Develop family orientations
  o Prevention..................................................................................................................July 2014
  o Detention......................................................................................................................July 2014
  o Probation......................................................................................................................July 2014
• Evaluate residential commitment program orientations and other opportunities for family
  engagement..........................................................................................................................July 2014
• Pilot Family Advisory Groups............................................................................................January 2014
• Create Family Support Groups............................................................................................January 2014
• Identify need, ability, and resources to develop a Multi-disciplinary Home Visitation
  Model .................................................................................................................................July 2014
• Ensure families are encouraged to attend multi-disciplinary staffings ..................................October 2013
• Create Communication Plan and Marketing Materials
  o Internal .............................................................................................................................January 2014
  o External ...........................................................................................................................March 2014
  o Promote Program Area Initiatives - Current and Proposed.............................................January 2014
• Update Officer Academy training
  o Probation........................................................................................................................September 2013
  o Detention.........................................................................................................................December 2013
• Develop in-service and stakeholder training........................................................................January 2014
• Develop resources for families............................................................................................January 2014 and Ongoing

Ensure quality gender specific services are provided in all facilities and programs by June 30, 2014.

All girls and boys across the DJJ continuum shall receive quality gender specific services. These services shall be delivered by state or contract provider staff that is trained, and receives ongoing training, in gender specific and culturally competent programs. Services will address the significant factors that contribute to girls’ delinquency (emotional factors, parental family problems, and substance abuse, etc.) and self-destructive behaviors (self-mutilation, suicide ideation, and self-defeating behaviors). Similarly, services will address the significant factors that contribute to boys’ delinquency (peer pressure, inappropriate expressions of emotions, dealing with authority figures, etc.).

Providing gender responsive services includes vocational programs that promote long term economic self-sufficiency for girls and boys. These will increase job skill readiness and prepare each for employment success (how to be a productive employee, timeliness, job protocol, addressing conflict, communication skills, etc.).

Providing gender responsive services also includes the care of pregnant and parenting girls. Programs serving this population must be designed to take into account the safety risk to girls, the fetus, or infant. In addition, these programs must work to maintain healthy contact between
mother and child. Likewise, programs servicing males who are parents must also provide interventions directed at effective parenting and fatherhood.

Gender specific needs are further addressed through gender specific programming. Gender-specific programming refers to program components that comprehensively address the special needs of adolescent girls and boys. Programming shall foster positive gender identity development, recognize the risk factors and issues most likely to impact females and males and the protective factors and skill competencies that can deter future delinquency. Programming shall include such topics as:

- Healthy relationships
- Social skill training
- Personal safety, abuse, and victimization
- Reproductive health and teenage parenting
- Adolescent development

- **Create a gender specific curricula for detention and probation officer academies** .................................................................Girls Completed; Boys Under Development
- **Provide ongoing training for key stakeholders regarding the needs of girls and boys, gender specific sanctions, and services.** ........................................................................................................Ongoing
- **Develop standards for girls programming based on evidence based practices and gender responsive services** .........................................................................................................................October 2014
- **Assess current gender responsive services in residential programs statewide** .................................................... Ongoing
- **Develop, implement (when necessary), and monitor the delivery of gender responsive services in residential programs statewide** ........................................................................................................Ongoing
- **Where staffing permits, place girls under the supervision of a female probation / conditional release case manager** ........................................................................................................... Ongoing
- **Implement small residential facilities that are staff (not hardwire) secure and are located in the community where the youth and family live for continued contact and support** .......... Ongoing

**Expand and enhance the delivery of trauma-informed services throughout DJJ by June 30, 2014.**

According to a recent National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges’ publication, the majority of youth who develop a pattern of delinquent behavior and experience subsequent juvenile court involvement have faced both serious adversities and traumatic experiences. Research continues to show that most youth who are detained in detention centers have been exposed to both community and family violence and many have been threatened with, or been the target of, such violence. Studies also demonstrate that youth who have multiple exposures to violence or victimization are at higher risk for mental health problems, behavioral problems, substance abuse, and delinquent behaviors. Also, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) rates are as high as 50% among juvenile justice involved youth, and some youth who do not meet criteria for a PTSD diagnosis are seriously affected by their traumatic histories.
Trauma histories among youth in DJJ’s care present two main challenges. First, youths’ trauma symptoms may interfere with the effectiveness of delinquency interventions. It is difficult, if not impossible, for youth to focus on rehabilitative programming if they are experiencing flashbacks and other symptoms related to (untreated) trauma. The second major challenge of the high prevalence of trauma histories among youth in our care is that people who have experienced trauma often live in a constant state of defensive hyper-alertness, with their brains programmed to remain in a “fight or flight” mode even when the surroundings are safe. This can result in youth being more likely to be aggressive with staff and other youth. Integration of trauma-informed care principles into the behavior management system of facilities is now known to reduce incidents and promote a calm, safe environment for youth and staff.

All youth coming into the juvenile justice system are screened utilizing the PACT which includes several items related to the youth’s trauma history. Additional assessments are available if it is determined that the youth has a trauma history. It is critical that when this information is revealed, DJJ staff have resources and strategies available to address the impact a trauma history has on a youth’s behavior. By understanding each youth’s history, interacting with them in a trauma responsive manner, and providing trauma responsive environments and services, we have a greater success at preventing and de-escalating defiant behaviors as well as helping youth receive the maximum benefit from delinquency interventions.

- Review agency and contracted providers’ policies and practices pertaining to trauma-informed care, and incorporate additional requirements to ensure that services are trauma-informed ...........................................................................................................................................June 2014
- Review and update the CORE training requirements for trauma-informed care ..................... January 2014
- Continue to train staff in the recognition of trauma and appropriate trauma-informed responses to the diverse needs and behaviors of youth .................................................................................................................Ongoing

Prevention

DJJ will offer resources to Prevention providers to educate staff about the prevalence of trauma among at-risk youth, as well as community resources available to assist youth struggling with the impact of trauma. .........................................................................................................................................................Ongoing

Detention

The following have been implemented in a number of detention centers:

1. Behavior management systems: staff are taught how to recognize triggers and respond appropriately and provide services.
2. Environment improvements: interiors of youth living areas include murals, journals, soft blankets, pajamas (replacing institutional sleepwear), rugs, etc.
3. Soft rooms: an area of the facility is available where youth can go to calm down, receive mental health services and counseling, or visit with their baby or toddler (for youth who are parents). The rooms are visually pleasing, comfortable, and include couches, stuffed animals, music, etc.
4. Gardens: gardening provides youth an opportunity to learn skills, obtain knowledge, and interact positively with staff. This interaction has the potential to break down barriers between youth and staff in a safe and open environment.

5. Dog Therapy Program: allowing youth to learn how to train and care for an animal develops compassion as well as knowledge that may assist them in getting a job.

As new best practices are identified, facilities will incorporate those that are applicable.

- Assess (and expand if necessary) trauma-informed programs and services at all secure detention facilities ......................................................................................................................... Ongoing

Probation

JPOs, in their interactions with and support of youth, need to be aware of and practice trauma-informed care. It is part of their training and performance expectations. DJJ will continue to ensure JPOs are providing care in the most effective and appropriate way.

- Review and update the online Community Resource Guide to better capture services for youth who have trauma histories ..................................................................................................................... January 2014
- Review and update the trauma-informed care training provided at the Juvenile Probation Academy ................................................................................................................................. June 2014
- Incorporate trauma-informed care strategies into case management practices and in the delivery of delinquency interventions for youth on probation and aftercare supervision ................................................................................................................. July 2014

Residential

Included in the scope of current residential contacts is the requirement that providers incorporate principles and practices related to trauma-informed care into the behavior management system; create a trauma-focused, restraint-free environment for youth in the care of DJJ; and provide training on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), victimization, exploitation, domestic violence, trauma, and recovery issues.

- Evaluate the incorporation of trauma-informed care in contracted residential facilities ................................................................................................................................. July 2014

Increase opportunities for vocational certification in all residential programs statewide by March 31, 2013.

DJJ has recently increased opportunities for industry-recognized certification for youth in residential programs by establishing two new Microsoft labs which prepare them for certification testing; two new craftsmen certification programs; and four Adobe certification training
programs. Most districts have career academies, and Workforce Florida has a list of high wages, high availability career fields.

All DJJ programs should provide, at a minimum, a Vocational Level 1 career interest inventory. This assists in planning, goal setting, and even just conversations as staff interact with youth.

To further enhance educational and vocational programs and develop marketable skills of its youth, DJJ is providing technical assistance and training to increase their work readiness. Vocational Level 2 courses, Career Exploration, will be established in all juvenile justice education programs (up from 59.5% in 2011-2012). Level 2 courses teach business soft skills such as interviewing, business attire, and writing a resume.

DJJ is also increasing vocational and technical training and certification programs (Level 3) for youth in 30% of its residential programs (up from 25% in 2011-2012). Level 3 programs provide prerequisite skill training that may lead to industry recognized credentials.

- Provide Vocational Career Interest Inventories (Level 1) at all residential facilities...........................Complete
- Provide Vocational Career Exploration (Level 2) at all residential facilities.................................Complete
- Provide Vocational and Technical Programs (Level 3) at 30% of all residential facilities...........Complete

**Vocational Programs:**
- Level 1 = Career Interest Inventory
- Level 2 = Career Exploration (business skills)
- Level 3 = Certification

"HBI is committed to helping students acquire knowledge and skills to help them succeed academically and pursue fulfilling careers. We enthusiastically support DJJ’s Roadmap to System Excellence... We believe that the Roadmap to Excellence clearly identifies the needs of young people in Florida.”

Dennis O. Torbett, senior vice president for Workforce Training and Employment, Home Builders Institute

Increase the use of alternatives to behavioral confinement through monitoring and improvements in effective behavioral management systems by January 2014.

The use of seclusion and restraint has traditionally been used in juvenile justice settings to control violent youth and hold them accountable for inappropriate behaviors. However, these practices are inconsistent with the agency’s move to trauma-informed best practices.

Instead, DJJ promotes hands-free behavior modification interventions for youth within our system who exhibit behaviors that place themselves or others at risk. Careful monitoring of the...
use of these interventions, and programmatic improvements to DJJ’s Protective Action Response (PAR) program and behavior management systems will provide safe environments and use the display of inappropriate behavior as an opportunity to model communication skills and strategies to help youth work through issues.

DJJ is committed to preventing incidents from escalating by implementing practices that identify, interrupt, and teach youth better coping skills. By providing safe, nurturing environments with supportive adult role models, we will significantly reduce the use of seclusion and restraint within our system.

**Detention**

All youth placed in secure detention have the same behavioral expectations, all of which are fundamentally based in respect. The Detention Services Behavior Management System (System) is designed to ensure a safe and secure environment. The System has cause and effect results and assists youth in learning that consequences are logical responses to their behaviors. The goal of the System is for the youth to learn from their actions or mistakes, correct them, and ultimately make better choices.

To reduce behavioral confinements in detention facilities, DJJ will:

- **Monitor the number of and the length of stays in behavioral confinement** ................................................................. Monthly
- **Evaluate data for trends and provide technical assistance as needed to reduce the use of behavioral confinement in identified areas** ........................................................................................................ Ongoing
- **Monitor the application and effectiveness of the behavior management system** .................................. Ongoing

**Residential**

Residential programs are prohibited from using “disciplinary confinement wherein a youth is isolated in a locked room as discipline for misbehavior” as part of their behavior management system, per 63E-7.009 Behavior Management F.A.C.

However, residential commitment programs may use room restrictions according to specific provisions (see sidebar). The temporary restriction of youths’ participation in routine activities by requiring them to remain in their sleeping quarters is allowed as part of its behavior management system.

DJJ’s Quality Improvement Review reviews behavior management issues which include the appropriate use of room restrictions.

**63E-7.009 F.A.C. (Residential Rule)**

- Room restriction shall not be used for a youth who is out of control or a suicide risk.
- A supervisor must give prior approval.
- Room restriction shall not exceed four hours and the door to the room shall remain open.
- Staff shall engage, or attempt to engage, the youth in productive interactions at least every thirty minutes.
- The program shall not deny a youth basic services, such as regular meals and physical or mental health services.
- Program staff shall use strategies, such as conflict resolution and constructive dialogue, to facilitate the youth’s reintegration into the general population when released from room restriction.
Protective Action Response (PAR) in Detention and Residential Facilities

For both detention and residential programs, DJJ is engaging in numerous improvements to its training processes regarding its PAR program. PAR is DJJ’s verbal and physical intervention system for maintaining a safe environment.

- Conduct fidelity monitoring in every DJJ residential program and detention facility by PAR master instructors ................................................................. In progress & Ongoing
- Establish new requirements for PAR certification and re-certification ........................................... July 1, 2013
- Establish new criteria for PAR master instructors .............................................................................. July 1, 2013
- Establish new PAR report training ..................................................................................................... July 1, 2013
- Revise the administrative PAR rules governing the direct care of youth .................................................. July 1, 2013-January 2014
- Monitor the number of physical responses in each program/facility .................................................. Monthly
- Evaluate data and provide technical assistance as needed to reduce physical responses in identified areas .............................................................................. Ongoing

These efforts are part of DJJ’s commitment to promote a safe, hands-free environment, proactively implement process improvements, and achieve consistency of service among all DJJ programs and facilities statewide.

Expand the services and number of Juvenile Assessment Centers (JACs), as identified by needs.

The 11 JACs across Florida provide critical intake and screening services for many of the youth and families referred to DJJ. After youth are presented to a JAC by law enforcement officers, JAC personnel assess the youth to determine whether they will be detained or released. During the screening process, youths’ risks to public safety and service needs are assessed. Referrals are made for further assessments, evaluations, and interventions, as needed. The JAC receiving process allows law enforcement to transfer the responsibility of the youth to DJJ and quickly return to community patrol to further enhance public safety.

In November 2011, DJJ began an analysis of current JAC contracts to ensure that an adequate number of staff (DJJ or contracted provider) were located at each JAC to perform the functions of detention screening, initiation of the intake process, and enhancement of the statewide Civil Citation initiative. As a result of this analysis, DJJ has executed the following amendments to current JAC contracts. (NOTE: A map of JACs can be found on the final page of this document.)

- Dedicated a position to serve as a statewide Civil Citation Coordinator
- Added detention screening staff and services, to include the completion of Community PACT Pre-Screen assessments for Civil Citation youth in Circuit 2 (Gadsden County), Circuit 6 (Pinellas County), Circuit 9 (Orange County), Circuit 10 (Polk County), Circuit
11 (Miami-Dade County), Circuit 13 (Hillsborough County), Circuit 17 (Broward County), and Circuit 18 (Brevard County)

- Expanded current JAC/Detention Screening contracts into Circuit 9 (added Osceola County, as well as detention screening staff and services to include the completion of PACT Pre-Screen assessments for Civil Citation youth) and Circuit 12 (added Manatee County and added detention screening/intake services)

DJJ has identified expansion needs in Escambia County, Circuit 1; and Bay County, Circuit 14. Both JACs are expected to be operational in the fall of 2013.

- Begin services in JACs in Circuits 1 and 14 .................................................................Fall 2013
- Conduct additional expansion analysis.................................................................Ongoing

Fully implement the Model Juvenile Community Resource Center in Alachua County by July 1, 2013.

The Juvenile Community Resource Center (JCRC) is located at the Alachua Regional Juvenile Detention Center in Gainesville, Florida and currently serves Alachua County youth and their families. The JCRC is designed to engage youth and families early in the delinquency process in order to complete assessments and refer to necessary interventions and services. The goal is to expand community involvement, identify community resources, and develop partnerships. Through these efforts, youth and families will be more informed and able to receive services.

This collaborative effort between detention and probation program areas expands the role of the Juvenile Detention Officer (JDO) and enhances the role of the Juvenile Probation Officer (JPO). Additionally, the community is given the opportunity to participate in services and interventions offered by DJJ. The linking of services as a prevention effort early in the delinquency process is expected to result in less involvement in the juvenile justice system overall for these youth.

Physically, the JCRC was remodeled to accommodate the JPO Supervisor and four JPOs who have been assigned to the project. Additionally, four JDOs were assigned to work alongside the JPOs. The day room area was painted to soften the appearance and make it a warm, inviting area for youth and their families. The space provides opportunities for individual and group meetings, as well as a number of classroom activities and classes such as self-esteem and communication.

Currently, staff meet with youth who are either being released from secure detention or who have been screened, do not meet detention criteria, and are being released directly from the JAC. This interaction allows intervention to begin immediately, and appropriate referrals are made for the services identified for the individual youth and family. All staff are trained on family engagement and conflict resolution/mediation.
The JCRC will strengthen youth, families, and communities for youth involved with the juvenile justice system. It will be a place to identify needs, establish partnerships with service providers, and provide an extended array of services.

Once fully implemented successfully, the Alachua model will be replicated statewide.

- **Screening and pre-disposition** ................................................................. Currently Offered
- **Civil Citation** .......................................................................................... Currently Offered
- **Respite care** ............................................................................................. Currently Offered
- **Community programs** .............................................................................. Currently Offered
- **Family engagement** .................................................................................. Currently Utilized

**Expand the services and number of Youth Reporting Centers (YRC) during FY 2013-2014, as identified by needs.**

In 2008, DJJ collaborated with community stakeholders to establish Youth Reporting Centers (YRCs) in every judicial circuit. This was done to ensure that a safe and convenient location is available in each community for youth and parents to contact a JPO and receive services. Locations for YRCs include schools, churches, community centers, recreation centers, municipal parks, neighborhood policing facilities, probation offices, etc.

DJJ will enhance the functionality of YRCs by collaborating to establish additional centers, expanding the type of services delivered, and providing programs during the critical hours of 3:00-6:00 p.m. They will offer evidence-based interventions, such as Life Skills Training (LST), Thinking for a Change (T4C), and Aggression Replacement Training (ART), as well as other services such as mentoring and after-school tutoring.

- **Expansion and improvement of YRCs** .................................................. Ongoing through 2014

“DJJ’s Roadmap to System Excellence provides us with more flexibility to do the right thing for at-risk youth who need our programs and doing it in a way that reaches them when they need it most. In the end, I know that it will help us save the futures of troubled kids. It also increases efficiency, which will free up resources that can be used to keep kids out of the juvenile justice altogether and to help those already in the system from getting any deeper.”

**Stacy Gromatski, president and CEO, Florida Network of Youth and Family Services**
Goal: Ensure Appropriate Youth Placement and Utilization of Residential Beds and Redesign Existing Resources

Residential commitment is the “deepest” end of the Florida juvenile justice system. As such, it should be used only when less restrictive, community-based services have been exhausted or cannot meet the needs of a youth. The placement of any youth into residential commitment should be done with the focus on both providing for the specific treatment needs of the youth and decreasing the risk of the youth to re-offend. The progress and success of youth in meeting treatment and performance goals should be the primary factors for how long a youth remains in a residential program.

- Detained youth go “deeper” into the system—specifically, they are more likely to have charges filed and more likely to get harsher disposition outcomes.\(^{17}\)
- “Assigning low-risk offenders to excessively intensive programs might provoke defiant reactions… reinforce delinquent attitudes and behavior, and disrupt pro-social networks and opportunities such as family ties and employment by requiring too much intervention from the criminal justice system. All of these factors may have unfavorable effects on future offending.”\(^{18}\)

Improving the management of the residential population requires strategic decision making in the areas of residential capacity and program design; placement of youth in residential facilities versus at home with community services and treatment; and transition services. Although resources are being shifted to the front end of the juvenile justice system, sufficient attention and resources will be placed on the back end, in residential commitment and transition. In fact, although fewer youth are being placed in residential commitment, due both to declining crime and reforms by DJJ, those youth who do receive residential placement will have the greatest need for services and treatments. Increasing attention to DJJ’s prevention efforts will in no way decrease attention to improving the care of youth at any point in the juvenile justice continuum.

**Improve strategic decision making in the placement of youth.**

Juvenile justice systems are challenged to find the right balance between holding youth accountable for their misbehavior and offering services and supervision that both keep the community safe and provide appropriate behavioral modification. Research shows that many youth in DJJ’s residential programs could be served better in the community, while maintaining public safety and providing effective programming and treatment at a reduced cost to the Florida taxpayer. Youth who are identified as low-risk to re-offend can—and should—be safely and effectively served by non-residential, community-based service providers.


This chart displays, by percentage of total youth committed, the offenses of youth disposed to residential placement over the last three fiscal years. In FY 2012-13, nearly a third of youth were committed for non-violent felony offenses, and 20% were committed for felonies involving violence and/or weapons. Forty-five percent of youth committed were committed for misdemeanor offenses or technical violations of probation (offenses such as violating curfew while on probation). Keeping those 45% of committed youth out of residential placement would allow them to be safely and more effectively served in their community. Resources could then be used more productively for front-end services to better serve delinquent youth and identify and serve more at-risk youth.

Therefore, DJJ has redesigned and expanded community alternatives for youth who can be more effectively served in a community-based setting and has increased its strategic decision making process to best serve youth. Efforts to improve placement decision making and reduce the number of youth committed to non-secure placement include several tools that guide decision making (Dispositional Matrix and Effective Response Matrix). However, DJJ is not processing youth’s cases simply by following formulas and charts; each youth’s case is handled individually according to the associated risks and needs of the youth and family through many different assessments, interviews, etc.
• **Redesign and expand community alternatives** - As residential commitment contracts expire, DJJ will assess needs and issue Invitations to Negotiate to procure services based on projected needs with consideration given to specialized services, geographic distribution, and utilization of capacity. DJJ will seek quality community-based programs for youth who do not need commitment services through competitive procurement that provides the best value for the state. Procurements will be for programs located strategically in areas of geographical need. This shifting of resources will enable DJJ to enhance the capacity of community-based services to better serve those youth who do not need a residential commitment placement. DJJ will maintain sufficient bed capacity to meet the needs of youth throughout the state at varying levels of restrictiveness and with the ability to provide the needed specialized mental health, substance abuse, and sex offender services, educational and vocational training, and gender responsive programs (both in non-secure and secure commitment placement). In some cases it is recognized that the specialized needs of a youth requiring residential placement may only be available in a program that is geographically distant from a youth’s home. In these instances, extra efforts must be made to foster family involvement and communication while the youth is in the program and address effective transition planning for when the youth is returned to their home and community. *Again, public safety will remain a priority.*

  o Expand capacity for Family Functional Therapy, Multi-Systemic Therapy, Multidimensional Family Therapy, and other in home family-based alternatives to residential programs.................................................................................. Ongoing

  o Continue diverting sex offenders for community-based sanctions and treatment ...... Ongoing

• **Juvenile Justice System Improvement Plan (JJSIP)** - DJJ, with assistance from Georgetown University’s Center for Juvenile Justice Reform, is implementing the JJSIP statewide. The JJSIP provides a framework for implementing best practices throughout the juvenile justice system. The framework includes a comprehensive strategy and a Dispositional Matrix (a “structured decision making tool”) which compares delinquent youths’ needs, risks, and offense(s) to match youth to appropriate services at the right restrictiveness level. The services are reflected in a menu of choices of appropriate graduated sanctions Another feature of the JJSIP is a tool for evaluating how closely services provided match the most effective interventions, based upon the youth’s risk and needs, and in line with leading research.

  o Expand into Circuit 7........................................................................................................ January 2013

  o Complete implementation in Circuit 6 ................................................................................ February 2013

  o Identify a circuit in each region for expansion .................................................................. June 2013

  o Train and implement statewide (in stages) ......................................................................... Fall 2013

  o Meet with State Attorneys to discuss concerns and ensure the Dispositional Matrix is not resulting in direct filing ......................................................................................... July 2014

  o Publish initial results ......................................................................................................... July 2014
• **Gender Responsivity** - Girls who require commitment to ensure public safety are best served following gender responsive guidelines.
  
  o Review current placement of girls in residential programs to which girls could be stepped down to a lower level or less restrictive environment in residential programs ..........July 2014
  
  o Identify short term specialized crisis stabilization placement options for girls with acute mental health needs that are beyond the scope and/or expertise of the residential service provider where the youth is placed. The purpose of the hospitalization would be to stabilize behavior, establish appropriate medication regimes, and conduct the assessments necessary to develop a comprehensive treatment plan and recommendations for the remainder of the girls’ placement ............................................................. Ongoing
  
  o Ensure that per diem rates for programs, including those serving girls, address any specialized needs of the population(s) to be served.........................................................Ongoing

• **Effective Response System** - DJJ has developed an improved, more uniform Effective Response System. It uses graduated responses, as well as incentives (explained below), to effectively address youth performance on probation supervision. The goals of the system are to provide consistency across the state in JPO responses and to select the priority needs to be addressed to help youth complete probation.

For Violations of Probation, the response system takes into account several key elements to identify an appropriate response within a matrix of choices:

1. The seriousness of the violation (victim impact, duration of the violation, frequency of the violation, effect on the youth and family, and community impact)

2. The youth’s risk to re-offend level.

The system provides probation staff with a number of alternative community sanctions, such as additional community service hours, more restrictive curfews, and placement on electronic monitoring, to address probation violations effectively in the community. The matrix may not include all options, but it will serve as a guide for JPOs. Handling violations without formal court involvement by identifying and quickly responding to youths’ behavioral problems with community based interventions will reduce the number of youth being formally processed by the court for technical violations of probation.

Incentives are an important new component to the system. They are individualized actions or material rewards in recognition of a youths’ success that are used to reinforce positive behavior and encourage completion of court-ordered sanctions. Rewards and support encourage continued positive behavior and promote long-term change. When youth have an important success during supervision, incentives may include verbal praise, letter of recognition, extended curfew, reduced drug testing, certificate of accomplishment, release from electronic monitoring, etc.

  • Develop improved system ..................................................................................Completed January 2013
  • Conduct training ........................................................................................................Complete
  • Implement statewide ..................................................................................................June 2013
- **Redirections Program** - DJJ issued an Invitation to Negotiate seeking Direct Service Providers (their own employees are in direct contact with youth) to provide Redirection services for girls and boys at risk of residential commitment. Specific delinquency interventions, provided throughout the State, will include the delivery of family-centered, evidence-based practices (including evidenced-based treatments/therapies), promising practices, and/or alternative family-centered therapies to youth who are at-risk for return to, or placement in, a secure residential commitment program. Through this community alternative, youth are provided with skills and treatment to strengthen their pro-social behavior and address their criminogenic needs. Strengthening the family unit is another part of the program. When successful, youth avoid being placed unnecessarily in a residential program to get such services, complete a treatment plan, and are diverted from future delinquent behavior.

Contracting directly with a service provider, as opposed to a managing entity, will increase the proportion of dollars allocated to direct services for youth and allow for services to be provided in all counties, with a choice of services in as many as possible. This business model supports DJJ’s continued efforts to redirect services more toward the front end of the juvenile justice system and ensure that resources are allocated to direct care services.

- **Issue ITN** .................................................................................................................................................. Completed
- **Begin services** ............................................................................................................................................. November 2013

In addition, Redirection services have been expanded, through federal funding, to include providing Medicaid Redirections Services to Medicaid eligible DJJ youth. Medicaid Redirections services are evidence-based treatment/therapies provided by Medicaid and certified by DJJ’s Quality Improvement unit........................................ October 2013

- **Probation Enhancement Services (PES)** - Youth under DJJ’s supervision may be referred to additional services. When in a PES placement, youth are also either on probation, on post-commitment probation, under probation day treatment, or on conditional-release status. PES may include electronic monitoring, mental health and/or substance abuse counseling, mentoring, career and education enhancement activities, parent and youth support groups/counseling, and respite services. PES placements are often short-term programs that target specific, identified youth needs. Youths’ JPOs continue to monitor their progress while they participate in PES.........................Ongoing

- **Day Treatment** - Youth on probation in need of a higher level of supervision and service may participate in day treatment programs which provide delinquency intervention services after school, as well as during evenings and weekends. JPOs or counselors monitor youths’ progress and compliance with court sanctions at home, school, and work. Individual, family, and small group counseling also may be provided. Due to a recent evaluation of recidivism rates and assessment of needs, contracts for these services were restructured to deliver more evidence-based delinquency intervention services effectively, including during peak offending hours in the afternoon and
evening. This was procured through an ITN, and contracts were effective July 1, 2012.............................................................Ongoing

- **Juvenile Diversion Alternative Program (JDAP)** - Research has shown that over-providing services or providing higher levels of care than needed may actually increase the likelihood of recidivism. Services must match youths’ individual levels of need. These programs are modified versions of the JDAP in Miami (originally Intensive Diversion and Delinquency Services - IDDS). JDAP offers a variety of diversion services that meet the needs of the youth, families, and community and provide appropriate, swift, and less restrictive community-based sanctions and services.

DJJ contracts to provide these services based on individual youth and family needs, typical of a diversion program:

1. Scheduling, supervision, and monitoring of compliance with court-ordered sanctions including community service, curfew, and restitution;
2. Random urinalysis monitoring for youth who are assessed as being at-risk or having a history of substance abuse;
3. Provision of individual, group, and family counseling which address the youth’s individualized needs and risks;
4. Anger management education;
5. Educational training;
6. Vocational services to age appropriate youth; and

Services must be provided during traditional and non-traditional business hours.

- **Revise, expand, and make JDAP services available in circuits 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, and 20 .............................................................. Completed**

- **Develop an ITN to revise, expand, and make services available in circuits 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, and 14 .............................................................. Ongoing**
NOTE: It is not necessary to provide interventions solely for property offenders. Evidence-based interventions target many risk factors associated with juvenile offending. Reducing risks and increasing strengths/protective factors decreases subsequent offending and achieves other positive outcomes (school attendance, family and peer relationships, employment, and mental health symptoms). The focus is on the risk and protective factors regardless of the offense. The risk and protective factors most related to offending are the same across offense types, with the possible exception of sex offenses. Providing evidence-based delinquency interventions at the appropriate dosage by trained staff has been proven to reduce offending, across offense types, and for serious/violent offending.


Validate the risk/needs assessment tool for residential youth.

DJJ partnered with the Florida State University (FSU) College of Criminology & Criminal Justice to validate the risk/needs assessment used for all youth in residential placement, the Residential Positive Achievement Change Tool (R-PACT). The R-PACT is used to identify residential youths’ criminogenic needs/risks across twelve risk domains, including record of arrests, school/academic status, mental health, employment, family history/relationships, social skills, and drug/alcohol use. The R-PACT is administered at intake to guide service provision to the youth; every 90 days to measure progress of those intervention strategies; and prior to release to gauge readiness for release and any transition needs.

The R-PACT validation study by FSU examined two main questions:

- What do R-PACT scores reveal about changes in risks and strengths that youth experience during residential placement?
- Do R-PACT scores predict re-offending?

The validation study confirmed that youth are indeed experiencing change within residential placement in the form of reduction in risk and increases in strengths/protective factors. Their change is “real” and can persist after release. The R-PACT scores are true predictors of re-offending. Youth scoring lower on risk and higher on protective factors are less likely to re-offend. Those youth experiencing more change in the positive direction (reduced risk, increased strengths) are even less likely to re-offend. The areas most important to reducing re-offending were Enhancing Social Skills and Improving Current Academic Status. Social Skills include dealing with others; handling one’s own emotions; overcoming difficult situations; impulse control; and aggression control. Current academic status is not as simple as grades, academic program, or behavior in school. It is also the value the youth places on education, the belief that
school is important and encouraging, and the extent to which the youth has bonded with teachers. Other areas with consistent effects on re-offending included current relationships, attitudes, employability aspirations, and aggression.

The findings of the study will influence DJJ’s policies regarding targeting of interventions on the most relevant areas for reducing re-offense rates and increasing post-release supervision where needed. The study also reinforced many of the current practices of DJJ, such as using the R-PACT to develop and revise performance plans for youth and tracking the dosage/frequency of intervention and treatment services provided during youths’ residential stays. A copy of the FSU report can be found on the DJJ website at: http://www.djj.state.fl.us/partners/our-approach/PACT/RPACT.

- Validate the R-PACT .......................................................... June 19, 2013
- Identify opportunities for future research and refinement of the R-PACT..............June 19, 2013
- Implement improvements ................................................................. July 2014

Continue to use community-based mental health and substance abuse services effectively for girls and boys in every circuit as an alternative to residential commitment.

Girls frequently come in contact with the juvenile justice system due to status offenses (conduct such as running away from home, curfew violations, truancy, uncontrollable behavior, and possession of alcohol that is unlawful because of a youth’s age). In the past, girls have been placed in detention for status offenses to protect them due to limited community options available for girls suffering from mental health/trauma needs. In a detention facility, girls receive needed services and treatment, but this can be achieved without unnecessarily locking them up.

Similarly, lower risk but higher need girls and boys can be held accountable and receive treatment in non-residential programs.

To more appropriately ensure youths’ needs are met, DJJ entered into rate agreements with mental health and substance abuse providers. The services vary by circuit needs and are provided to youth based on assessments such as drug screening, mental health/ substance abuse assessments, and outpatient counseling (individual, group, family), and residential placement for more intensive services when needed. Eligible youth may be:

- Youth adjudicated with misdemeanor offenses who are not eligible for residential commitment OR
- Youth with felony offenses that need mental/health and/or substance abuse services that can be treated in the community OR
- Non-adjudicated youth with civil citations that need mental health/substance abuse services.
Provided services address issues and individualized, gender specific treatment needs, such as addiction, co-occurring disorders and their behavioral effects, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and trauma relating to physical or sexual abuse, neglect, or domestic violence. Mental health services use effective interventions, such as behavioral, cognitive, affective/dynamic, and systems perspectives to address the needs of individual youth. These rate agreements keep youth from unnecessarily being placed in the system and appropriately kept in their homes and communities.

- Provide a gender-neutral screening and assessment processes to determine appropriate placement, with the goal of ensuring maximum services are received in minimally restrictive environments, including community-based services and day treatments for girls and boys
  - Entering the DJJ system........................................................................................................................................................... Completed
  - Already in custody. .......................................................................................................................................................................... Completed

- Educate judges regarding mental health and substance abuse alternative options............... Ongoing

### Reduce residential bed capacity in phases between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2014.

Along with the steady decline of delinquency in Florida, the number of youth committed to residential programs has decreased by 51% during the last five years. As of June 5, 2013, residential capacity was 2,668 for all program types and the utilization rate was an average of 87.3%. This is a daily average of 364 unfilled beds. The decline in residential commitments, and the efforts to ensure residential placement is only used for youth who are assessed as being at a higher risk to re-offend, may further lessen the need for residential commitment beds. To ensure youth receive needed services in the least restrictive environment possible and to modify current bed capacity to account for the reduction in commitments and unfilled beds, DJJ has begun implementing a phased-in reduction and reallocation in commitment capacity between July 2012 and June 2014. Reductions in residential capacity may be appropriate as reforms to the juvenile justice system are implemented. Throughout the process of the reduction of residential beds, public safety will remain a priority.

- Reduce 620 non-secure residential beds ...........................................................................................................................................Complete
- Assess utilization and referral for residential programs to determine appropriate number of beds to meet the needs in the continuum.....................................................................................................................................................June 2014

### Reduce recidivism of youth who complete residential placement by 5% by 2015 through transition and re-entry services.

The recidivism rate among youth who complete residential commitment programs is unacceptably high. Although the number of delinquency arrests is in a sharp, multi-year decline, residential commitment recidivism rates have dropped only 2% since FY 2006-07.
There are multiple measures of recidivism. DJJ’s official recidivism measure -- youth adjudicated by the court for a new law violation committed within 12 months of completion of a residential program -- was 41% for FY 2010-2011 program completers. If adjudications for violations of probation are also considered, the recidivism rate rises to 44%. If arrests for new offenses (that are not necessarily adjudicated by the court) are considered, the recidivism rate rises to 61%.

Reducing the official recidivism rate by 5% over the next three years is an ambitious goal. As DJJ reforms policies and procedures to reduce or eliminate residential placement for youth who are determined to be at a low or moderate risk of re-offending, the average seriousness level of youth released from residential commitment will increase. Youth assessed as moderate-high and high-risk to re-offend typically face a number of personal challenges and will require intensive services if the goal of reducing recidivism is to be met. To achieve this goal, DJJ is focusing resources on providing high-quality, comprehensive services tailored to the specific needs of transitioning youth and families. Additionally, DJJ will continue to enhance specialized services, such as mental health and substance abuse, to youth in residential placement.

As determined through the R-PACT Validation Study conducted by FSU, the R-PACT is a valuable tool in predicting reoffending. As noted previously, a youth’s improvement in specific protective factors, specifically special skills, can translate into a reduced chance of re-offending once a youth is released. DJJ and the residential programs have the ability to track the delivery of their delinquency interventions, changes in criminogenic needs and risks, and improvements a youth makes during their time in the program. The ability to target delinquency interventions to specifically address reducing the likelihood of re-offending exists using these tools. A copy of the FSU report can be found on the DJJ website at: http://www.djj.state.fl.us/partners/our-approach/PACT/RPACT.

For those residential youth who recidivate, 58% do so within four months of release. This demonstrates that youth are at greatest risk of re-offending almost immediately after being released (see following chart). DJJ’s transition strategies must include best practices that target this critical time, and youth must be connected to appropriate services upon returning to their home and community following a residential commitment.
As part of DJJ’s transition initiative, the needs of youth returning home following residential placement have been identified through a validated needs assessment. DJJ also surveyed youth, parents, community stakeholders and providers to determine the needed services within communities that will help ensure successful outcomes for these youth. That information was used to develop an Invitation(s) to Negotiate for those services. DJJ continues to place emphasis on enhancing transitional services. In recent contract renewals and negotiations, DJJ requested designated positions for transition services.

To provide youth returning home with critical services that will result in more opportunities for success while ensuring public safety, DJJ will:

- Conduct surveys of communities, stakeholders, families, and youth statewide to determine local needs. ................ ................................................................. Completed
- Develop specifications for a Request for Information (RFI) based on the validated needs assessment instrument (PACT) and the results of the surveys. .................................................... Completed
- Conduct a question-and-answer meeting for stakeholders. ................................................................. Completed
- Develop an ITN based on the responses to the RFI and information gathered from the question and answer session. ................................................................. Completed
- Develop an administrative rule establishing uniform procedures for transition services ..... Completed
- Implement new service contracts ................................................................. July 1, 2013
- Establish joint training for contracted residential program staff and JPOs..................August 2013

Beginning in July, the Office of Probation and Community Intervention will offer a new array of transition services (previously Community-based Intervention Services - CBIS) that will address the individual needs of each youth returning home following a residential commitment and will provide a strength-based approach that includes vocational, educational, professional, and personal skills building. This new statewide approach will facilitate improved community partnerships, enhance communication, and provide innovative methods that foster family and youth engagement.

All youth referred for transition services receive the most appropriate services, based on assessments of their individualized needs. Program services are designed in this manner to effectively and efficiently serve all youth within the community.

Furthermore, Circuit Liaisons have been identified and Community Re-entry Teams have been established to provide support to youth and families throughout the state. The teams have recently begun operating in each judicial circuit and work to connect youth and families with established resources in their area. These teams will be instrumental in ensuring that youth receive the right services, in the right place, in the right way, at the right time. As a whole, the transition and re-entry initiatives provide a model program for statewide implementation.
Manage the Resources

DJJ must make the best decisions and provide the most appropriate services to effectively and efficiently serve youth, their families, and the community. The agency also must manage its resources well and be fiscally responsible to the public. Efforts to improve resource management at DJJ will include improving communication and collaboration; enhancing workforce effectiveness; strengthening procurement, contract monitoring, and quality improvement practices and processes; and conducting effective resource realignment.

Goal: Improve Communication and Collaboration

DJJ has important and complex responsibilities and is wise to seek input and assistance from its stakeholders. DJJ also is increasing efforts to form partnerships and collaborations with experts in the field. To truly succeed in such a significant endeavor, everyone with a stake in the outcomes of our future generations needs to be involved.

Seek, consider, and respond to input on the Roadmap via Town Hall, Stakeholder, Editorial Board, and other group meetings and methods.

Beginning in October 2012, Secretary Walters traveled the state to join local leaders from DJJ and meet with citizens across Florida on a listening tour. At media interviews, Editorial Board meetings, visits to detention facilities and residential programs, individual and small stakeholder group meetings, and Town Hall meetings, we explained why the reforms underway at DJJ are critical and how they will be achieved in order to ensure DJJ is delivering the right services, to the right youth, in the right way, and at the right time.

Additionally, targeted workshops were held with groups on specific issues, such as detention cost share and collaborate with law enforcement. Gathering key partners to discuss issues and formulate partnerships to craft solutions is part of our strategy to build unified plans and joint successes.

From the input gathered from over 1,500 citizens around Florida, we have updated the Roadmap to include suggested clarifications and revisions. This version is a more comprehensive and detailed plan meant to provide understanding and garner support. It is a plan meant to inspire others to join in to help our struggling youth, families, and communities in an atmosphere of collaboration and ownership of both the problems and solutions, and ultimately the successes (see “New Additions to the Roadmap” for a list of new topics, included in this draft as a result of stakeholder input).
These initial rounds of events were just the kickoff. This strategy of increased communication and feedback gathering will continue, and DJJ will always seek input. Please visit http://www.djj.state.fl.us/roadmap-to-system-excellence to listen to past Town Hall meetings, read reports, or find upcoming meetings and events pertaining to the Roadmap initiatives. The last page of this document lists further ways to contact us and get involved.

**Foster coordinated services and information-sharing partnerships with other state agencies.**

The Agency for Health Care Administration (ACHA), Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), Department of Children and Families (DCF), DJJ, Department of Education (DOE), Department of Health (DOH), Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) Program, and Florida's Office of Early Learning (FOEL) created an interagency agreement to "coordinate services and supports for children in Florida and to collaborate on developing necessary local and statewide resources for children being served by multiple agencies. Such services require the coordinated flow of information across multiple child-serving agencies to ensure that policy, procedure, service delivery, and resource development are provided in a manner that maximizes the likelihood of positive outcomes. …the safety and well-being of children requires a commitment of the agencies to work cooperatively at the state, regional, and local levels."

Within the agreement are the following principles:

1. Services should be family-based and provided in the least restrictive setting. Residential placement should be provided as a last resort with a transition plan to return the child(ren) to the family if possible.

2. Children and families with multiple needs require the integrated coordination and collaboration of services from multiple agencies.

3. Each agency is responsible for paying its equitable share of costs for services consistent with its mandates.

4. Agencies should seek to minimize state costs.

Regional monthly reports are generated and quarterly reports from a state review team are provided to the Florida Children and Youth Cabinet to track and identify patterns and prevalent issues which need addressing. Examples include competency hearings; placement or service needs for children waiting for services; children receiving services from multiple agencies; and cases to be reviewed. DJJ cases to be reviewed include youth who have mental health issues, dependent youth who committed sexual offenses against a sibling and cannot return home after DJJ residential commitment, dependent youth released from DJJ secure detention or residential commitment, and the release of youth from Juvenile Assessment Centers in particular instances.
Also in the agreement are guidelines for cost-sharing for needed services for youth. For those youth that are eligible, Medicaid can be used to pay for covered services. Youth adjudicated delinquent or high risk for further law violations and who are on diversion may receive mental health and substance abuse services through Medicaid based on their eligibility. Shared funding will occur when the youth is eligible for services but Medicaid is not available. If Medicaid is not available and a youth is in need of residential treatment for emotional disorders or behavioral/developmental disabilities from multiple agencies, funding or services should be equally shared among the agencies.

Expand collaborative efforts with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to care for youth dually served in the child delinquency and welfare systems.

- **The Crossover Youth Practice Model (CYPM)** is a collaboration between DJJ and DCF, led by Georgetown University. Dually served youth, those in both the child welfare system and the delinquency system need careful and competent joint case management. This high risk population does not have the family structure to rely upon for support in their court involvement. Therefore, these youth lack this important protective factor for reducing their risk to re-offend.

  The project provides communication, joint case management, shared early intervention, and comprehensive services for foster care youth involved in the juvenile justice system. The result will be fewer delinquent events and better outcomes as these youth move to young adulthood. The CYPM has been implemented in Judicial Circuits 4, 7, 10, 11, and 17. DJJ is in the process of securing federal grant money to expand the CYPM in six additional circuits over the course of the next two years.

  - Obtain funds for expansion ................................................................. In progress
  - Expand to six additional circuits .......................................................... 2013-2015

- **Improving Coordination in cases involving Protective Investigations** is an issue that relates to all DJJ’s program areas. DJJ is coordinating with DCF to improve the process for tracking calls to the Abuse Hotline that relate to juvenile justice programs. DJJ is establishing a way for DCF to send notifications directly to the DJJ Central Communications Center for any incidents reported to the abuse hotline relating to juvenile justice.
NOTE: Specific to residential services, in any incidents involving excessive force or other related allegations, a program monitor is sent to the program within 24 hours to conduct an immediate assessment of the situation and interview the youth involved. As needed, action will be taken to ensure the youth’s safety. This DJJ assessment is independent of any investigation that is conducted by DCF personnel.

- Finalize revisions to DJJ’s and DCF’s electronic reporting and tracking systems and revise their related Interagency Agreement ..................December 2013

Integrate DJJ services with workforce providers during 2013-2014.

Employers can be useful partners in helping turn the life of troubled youth around or prevent them from making poor choices. Workforce providers will be sought and partnered with to establish job and/or community service opportunities for youth. These efforts will be a part of the newly-created Reform Specialist positions in each probation circuit.

- Maintain staff on all 24 regional Florida Workforce boards statewide............................... Ongoing
- Develop relationships with local businesses to assist in job placement/training programs for youth.................................................................................................................. Ongoing
- Develop relationships with local businesses to assist in community service programs for youth.................................................................................................................. Ongoing

Cultivate positive relationships with the private provider community.

DJJ contracts with numerous private providers along its continuum of services and for 100% of its residential services. Therefore, it is critical to have a relationship with the private provider community that is communicative and collaborative in order to ensure all youth get the best care and achieve the best outcomes.

- Develop a support team to assist residential programs in crisis comprised of the Florida Juvenile Justice Association executive committee and Asst. Secretary of Residential Services .......................................................................................................................... March 2014
- Create specific opportunities to strengthen relationships between DJJ program areas (prevention, detention, probation, and residential) and private providers............................. Ongoing
- Provide opportunities for providers to design programs and measure success against projected outcomes ............................................................................................................. Ongoing

Conduct workshops, trainings, and presentations and develop resources for various stakeholder groups.

As DJJ builds and strengthens it collaboration with stakeholders, we will provide ongoing workshops, trainings, and presentations. This will include faith-based, dependency, detention alternatives, and human trafficking conferences and individual topics such as trauma-informed
care, younger youth, cultural sensitivity, prevention awareness, Civil Citation, adolescent development and the teenage brain, family engagement, gang identification, the differing needs of girls and boys, and communication. Others will be added based on need or expressed requests.

- Develop and post an Internet calendar of events .......................................................... October 2013

Furthermore, DJJ continues to build its collection of resources for youth, parents, law enforcement, the courts, community members, etc.

- Develop and post an Internet collection of resources ..................................................... October 2013
- Update the Law Enforcement Florida Juvenile Handbook.............................................December 2013

Ensure court and law enforcement personnel are kept updated on youth’s progress and status.

DJJ works to partner with law enforcement and the courts to keep open lines of communication. To better collaborate with court and law enforcement personnel to ensure there is an appropriate and timely exchange of information in order to best serve youth, DJJ will seek their input on improvements and unmet needs.

- Circuits will meet with law enforcement partners to strategize ways to increase communication and strengthen partnerships................................................................. November 2013
  - Discuss strategies for supervision of youth on home detention, electronic monitoring, and committed pending placement, as well as chronic misdemeanants and those at the highest risk to re-offend.
- Circuits will meet with court personnel to strategize ways to increase communication and strengthen partnerships................................................................. November 2013
  - Discuss how to improve state attorney recommendations and Predisposition Reports, and otherwise share youths’ top-ranked criminogenic needs/ protective factors and other critical information that they then use to determine what type of supervision and services a youth needs.
  - Discuss how to improve communicating the status of supervision through the submission of progress reports, termination requests, violations of supervision, etc.
- Ensure court and law enforcement personnel know how to access the data and research available on the DJJ web site and provide any requested data, research, statistics, trends, predictions, etc. ................................................................. Ongoing
Increase availability of data to the public.

DJJ has a robust research and data section that ensures the foundation of all decisions and planning is steeped in the latest facts. The agency is committed to utilizing data and outcomes to develop a model that results in improved results for youth, families, and communities. Specialists analyze circuit data such as the Delinquency Profile, Residential Data Reports, Civil Citation, Monthly Accountability Reports, data related to the Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT), etc., to assess service delivery and outcomes. These assessments will assist in benchmarking and implementing tasks from the Roadmap and help in continuing to enhance services. As the agency works to support reform efforts, it also is working to provide more information available to its stakeholders and anyone interested in what DJJ is doing and why. These reports, and others, can be found at [http://www.djj.state.fl.us/research](http://www.djj.state.fl.us/research).

- The Delinquency Profile is the electronic release of data on delinquency arrests and dispositions. It provides access to data broken down by judicial circuit and county by offense, race, age, and sex. It covers a five-year period ending with the most current fiscal year and captures Florida’s juvenile justice system at several points along the continuum:
  - Civil Citation
  - Intake
  - Disposition
  - Judicial/Non-judicial Handling
  - Court-Diversion Programs
  - Probation
  - Residential Commitment
  - Transfers to the Adult Court System
The Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT) Dashboard is an interactive online report. Data is taken from the almost 750,000 PACT Pre-Screen and Full Assessments completed in the State of Florida from July 2006 through June 2010. Statewide information can be filtered by region, judicial circuit, county, gender, and race. Topic views include risk to re-offend; drug and alcohol use; mental health issues; motives for crime; school, family, and social issues; and criminogenic needs.

Residential Data Reports contain quarterly and annual information. The reports can be searched by region, program type, and program name. The reports contain the following information:

**Quarterly Measures**
- Program length of stay
- Escapes
- Excessive/Unnecessary use of force incidents
- Major deficiencies/critical incidents
- Percentage of youth admitted assessed as low, moderate, moderate-high, and high risk to re-offend
- PAR rates (behavior management physical interventions)
- Youth arrests

**Annual Measures**
- Seriousness index of youth in program
- Recidivism
- Completion rate
- Total releases

The Executive Dashboard (also known as PPI) highlights and tracks measurable statistics throughout the juvenile probation system. This new feature allows DJJ to identify and set performance measures that support reform. The dashboard sets floating benchmarks where goals can change as the numbers fluctuate. While this dashboard doesn’t represent all of the daily duties that probation officers perform, it does provide a snapshot of reform. The data related to youth contacts have been extracted from...
more than 2.2 million case note entries made by probation staff and providers over the last 12 months.

- The *DJJ/DCF Profile of Youth Served* features maps, tables, and charts comparing the general population of youth served by DJJ and those receiving foster care or other services provided by the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF). Offenses and levels of placement within DJJ’s continuum of services are presented in interactive displays, enabling the user to filter from location down to the ZIP code, gender, race/ethnicity, and gang involvement. The DJJ/DCF Profile uses information collected from the Juvenile Justice Information System database managed by DJJ. This data is then matched to the Florida Safe Families Network Database maintained by DCF. All data is currently for calendar year 2012.

- The *Civil Citation Dashboard* examines Florida’s use of Civil Citation as an alternative to arrest for first time misdemeanants. In addition to statewide figures, the Dashboard makes it possible to access data broken down by judicial circuit, county level, and law enforcement agency via an interactive web-based format. Data is presented in both tabular and graphic format, by offense type, race, age, and sex. The Dashboard is updated monthly using data from the Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS) and covers a rolling 12-month period, ending in the most recent month.

- The *Current Performance Measurement Reporting* (PMR) system is part of DJJ’s commitment to share program performance data on an ongoing basis with taxpayers and other stakeholders throughout Florida. The Current PMR contains a series of performance measures for each of DJJ’s program areas. Programs and services will be evaluated monthly (or as often as new performance data is available) on measures such as utilization, youth admitted, youth served, offenses during supervision, and other pertinent indicators that will be integrated over time. Most of the measures that will be available through the
Current PMR system will have been part of existing contracts and program monitoring procedures, but will now be shared with the public in an easily accessible, user-friendly format.

- *The Monthly Accountability Scorecard* promotes transparency and accountability by tracking key indicators of the agency’s performance. Comparing these statistics enables DJJ to make policy decisions that provide the greatest benefit to youth in the juvenile justice system. The data reported for each measure in the scorecard are updated monthly and reported as a comparison to the same month during the previous fiscal year.
Goal: Enhance Workforce Effectiveness

The strength of DJJ’s staff is reflected in the quality of care provided to its youth. DJJ is undertaking initiatives to ensure it employs the best direct-care staff and reduces staff turnover.

Test and train all detention direct-care employees by February 2013 and continually test detention and probation candidates to ensure their suitability for working with delinquent youth as a condition of employment.

With turnover rates that consume scarce resources and a commitment to ensuring staff exhibit appropriate behavior toward youth, DJJ will utilize a validated assessment to gauge staff behavior toward youth in eight domains. They are:

1. Harshness or Aggressiveness (punitive, adversarial, or power used to force compliance)
2. Weakness or Conflict Avoidance (youth in control or allowing manipulative, disobedient, or assertive behavior)
3. Crossing Professional Boundaries (too involved or encouraging dependence)
4. Concern for Youth Development (picks easiest solution or doesn’t help youth understand and learn)
5. Communication Style (insulting or demeaning)
6. Teamwork (how well the officers work together)
7. Classifying (recognizes behavior patterns or problems)
8. Style (inappropriate tact or style)

The assessment will be followed by a six-hour training session on these same domains to reinforce behavioral expectations and remediate areas of weakness, if needed. Additional coaching and mentoring may also be used.

In June 2013, the probation and community intervention program area will begin using the assessment during the hiring process for all new-hire juvenile probation officer (JPO) applicants in an effort to ensure their suitability for working with youth in the juvenile justice system. Additional training will be added as a component of the curriculum at the JPO training academy.

- Train all current direct care detention staff and new applicants for those positions...... Completed
- Train all new applicants for direct care probation positions .........................June 2013 – Ongoing
Develop a database of employee exit interviews to track concerns and implement solutions to reduce turnover and improve employee job satisfaction by June 30, 2013.

DJJ conducts exit surveys with employees to identify the reasons for their choice to leave DJJ. Exit surveys are mailed within 30 days of separation. Those questionnaires are forwarded to the applicable program office for review and action as appropriate. To improve the usefulness of the information received, the Bureau of Personnel will enter all results into a database. An agency-wide analysis will be conducted semi-annually and provided to DJJ’s Executive Leadership Team so that concerns will be addressed. ................................................................. Ongoing

Refine and strengthen the role of a Juvenile Probation Officer (JPO) by August 1, 2013.

JPOs play a critical role in promoting Florida's public safety and reducing juvenile crime. They are the front-line staff responsible for coordinating effective intervention services and providing support and supervision for youth on diversion, probation, and post residential supervision. Effective and efficient case management is vital to providing services to youth while keeping the public safe.

As DJJ places more emphasis on working with families and communities, the role of the JPO has evolved. Therefore, DJJ has revised the position descriptions for JPOs, Sr. JPOs, and JPO Supervisors to ensure that their expectations reflect the various reform initiatives of DJJ's more community-based juvenile justice system.

To ensure JPOs effectively assist the youth and families they serve, greater emphasis will be placed on community involvement, strengthening families, and helping support youth in becoming responsible citizens. JPOs will be fully integrated into the local community and more directly involved in the delivery of evidence-based delinquency intervention services. To affect this change from a compliance-driven, process-centered probation approach to one focused on serving and supporting youth, families, and communities, DJJ will:

- Analyze current JPO tasks and functions and propose changes needed to fulfill redefined roles in areas such as the following:
  - Hiring practices to yield most suitable candidates
  - Specialized roles and alternate schedules, including evenings and weekends
  - Position descriptions
  - In-home family services
  - Structured decision making and effective responses to violations of probation
  - Caseload size/type
  - Oversight of youth on diversion
  - The same JPO throughout a youth’s involvement to build trust and ensure consistency
  - Family satisfaction surveys
  - Delivery of effective, evidence- and research-based interventions and group facilitation
Behavior modification and intensive supervision practices
- Youth/family/community-driven strategies. ......................................................... Completed

- Determine the need for policy and procedure changes. ........................................ Completed
- Implement new position descriptions.................................................................... August 2013

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**Hire and train a designated Juvenile Justice Reform Coordinator at headquarters and Reform Specialists in all 20 judicial circuits by August 1, 2013.**

During the summer of 2013, DJJ identified and hired a headquarters Juvenile Justice Reform Coordinator, along with Reform Specialists statewide in each circuit to specifically assist with promoting and supporting the reform initiatives. The reassigning of these probation and community intervention services positions reinforces DJJ’s commitment to engaging providers, families, and communities to assure we have the right combination of services and sanctions, in the right place, at the right time, as we care for each youth and keep the public safe.

Reform Specialists will serve as community liaisons, connecting the local juvenile justice offices and staff with community providers and services. They will be particularly focused on transition services, community re-entry, alternatives to secure detention, and diversion programs. This includes increasing the utilization of existing programs, coordinating with stakeholders to develop new opportunities, and coordinating with referring agencies and service providers. The Reform Specialists will be tasked with ensuring that current community services are in line with the agency’s reform efforts and identifying any gaps in services.

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**Train 50 DJJ residential and detention program staff on a specialized mental health curriculum by February 2013.**

A Juvenile Justice/Mental Health Training Grant awarded by the National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice (NCMHJJ) provides funding for a train-the-trainer session for fifty DJJ residential, detention and health services staff. The NCMHJJ training will provide a new, specialized training curriculum entitled Mental Health Training Curriculum – Juvenile Justice (MHTC-JJ) and was developed and extensively tested by the Models for Mental Health/Justice Action Network. The MHTC-JJ training curriculum focuses on adolescent development, mental health disorders and treatment, trauma-informed care and practical strategies for engaging and interacting with families and youth.

- Conducted the train-the-trainer session.................................................................. Completed
- Conduct training statewide...................................................................................... Ongoing
Goal: Strengthen Procurement, Contract Monitoring and Quality Improvement Practices and Processes

Through improvements in procurement, management, and monitoring of contracts, DJJ ensures that the best services possible are provided to youth and communities are kept safe. DJJ has recently reviewed its contract management/monitoring policies and procedures and improved its methods for the oversight and review of service delivery.

Additionally, a number of initiatives are ongoing.

- Agency-wide contract manager training provides the most up-to-date information so managers can more effectively manage their contracts.
- Contracts are awarded to providers who demonstrate the highest impact on youth within a broad continuum of in-home and out-of-home services.
- A variety of extensive reviews are conducted: employee performance, youth assessments, etc.
- There is a consolidation of services, managing higher risk programs and services, and eliminating organizational and process barriers.

DJJ is committed to continually improving its services.

Continually improve the procurement process by implementing the use of the Invitation to Negotiate process for service procurement.

DJJ has strategically shifted to the Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) contract process. This helps identify providers who propose the most innovative and effective services under a competitive pricing agreement, while allowing for the negotiation of contract-specific performance measures.

DJJ, with an outside consulting firm, assessed its current procurement, contract monitoring, and quality improvement processes. This project was an important step to ensure that these processes are aligned with DJJ's overall strategy and values, as follows:

- Solicit only those services that are needed.
- Open the procurement process to all existing and potential providers/applicants.
- Universally apply fairness, consistency, and accountability in procurement and contracting processes.
- Consider geographic distribution in procurement planning.
- Insist on fidelity in the contracting process and adherence to contract terms and conditions.
• Manage contracts and procure services to maintain stability in the service delivery system.
• Hold DJJ and provider staff accountable for their performance and outcomes.
• Prioritize the best value and highest quality of services.
• Ensure contracts are based on data-supported risks, needs, and targeted populations.
• Develop economic and operational efficiencies.
• Encourage innovation in program administration and service delivery.
• Incorporate best practices into the delivery of delinquency interventions.

**Improve the practical application of policies and procedures by conducting Annual Internal Reviews within each detention center.**

To ensure the consistent application of policies and procedures, a team of detention subject matter experts will conduct Annual Internal Reviews at each detention center. This review serves to provide technical assistance, identify best practices, and to improve the delivery of services. .................................................. Completed for 2012-2013 Except Monroe County

**Evaluate tools used to assess youths’ risks and needs to ensure fidelity and validity.**

DJJ is constantly researching the most effective tools used to assist in the care of our youth and evaluating currently-used tools, practices, and programs. Currently the agency is evaluating two of its tools related to youths’ risk and protective factors and risk to re-offend.

- **Fidelity Monitoring of the Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT) Administration** - Fidelity (reliability) reviews of the administration of the PACT tool will be conducted. The tool has been validated; however the accuracy is only ensured if it is utilized correctly and consistently. The fidelity reviews and subsequent assessor coaching will ensure optimal consistency and reliable ratings from one assessor to the next. Concepts, definitions, and response options will be clarified to ensure consistency among assessors. Coaching on Motivational Interviewing will improve the quality of the information obtained.
  - Conduct review .......................................................................................... Ongoing
  - Communicate any revisions ........................................................................ Ongoing

- **Detention Risk Assessment Instrument (DRAI) analysis** - DJJ’s partners and stakeholders (law enforcement, prosecutors, courts and service providers) must have tools and information to help decide the risks and needs of youth in order to respond objectively and effectively when youth violate the law. An evaluation of the
DRAI will determine whether the instrument is appropriately identifying youth in need of secure detention, is gender-neutral, culturally responsive, etc.

○ Evaluate DRAI. ............................................................................................................................. July 2014

**Implement a shared services model for provider management and oversight.**

Strengthening the procurement, program and contract monitoring, and quality improvement practices and processes employed by DJJ is critical, particularly as almost 65% of the agency’s services are provided by private contractors. An important aspect of this strategy is the implementation of a Provider Management Shared Services Model. Oversight services currently found in numerous areas throughout the agency will be consolidated, supporting DJJ’s capability to shift resources more readily from one program area to another as it implements its Roadmap. This also supports the ability to best manage and monitor higher risk contracts/programs by applying the right amount of effort, using the appropriate skill levels, at the right time. A Shared Services approach will eliminate organizational and process barriers to prioritize the use of limited resources on tasks that must be completed to best support Florida’s youth. Major milestones include:

- Implement incident management & procurement shared services approach.......................August 2013
- Implement management & oversight shared services approach in pilot region ............... January 2014
- Implement management & oversight shared services approach statewide.......................June 2014
Goal: Realign Resources

The most costly program area within DJJ is residential services. A significant redirection of funds from reductions of unused residential beds and the decreasing population in residential placement and secure detention has begun. This involves shifting resources (budget allocations, procurement opportunities, contracts, staffing, etc.) away from out-of-home residential placements and into front-end prevention, intervention, diversion, and intensive home- and community-based services.

With continued reductions to residential commitment programs for youth as a result of effective prevention and intervention programs, the 2013-2014 Florida Families First budget provides more than $10 million to expand effective prevention and treatment programs for youth at risk to engage in criminal activity. This investment includes:

- More than $2 million to expand slots in existing PACE Center for Girls across the state and open a new school in Miami-Dade;
- $1.5 million to expand the Children-In-Need/Families-In-Need counseling services to at-risk youth in rural counties;
- $5 million for Boys and Girls Clubs to expand their Street Smart, Gang Prevention, and Prevention through Reentry programs statewide; and
- $1.5 million for the Big Brothers Big Sisters programs targeting youth of incarcerated parents for mentoring and counseling.

Between July 2012 and June 2014, shift resources resulting from reduced residential beds to ensure adequate funding for the remaining residential programs and to enhance front-end, community-based services.

Declining delinquency arrests and commitments and the implementation of the structured decision making system and the dispositional matrix will allow DJJ to strategically reduce the number of residential commitment beds. This reduction in residential beds and its impact on available resources will be tracked closely. It is critical that the remaining residential programs effectively provide services to youth and have the funding to meet the specialized needs of those youth. “Appropriate treatment delivery requires that offenders be assessed on a range of factors known to be predictive of recidivism, and then those youth defined as higher risk cases should be matched with higher degrees of service intervention.”\(^{19}\) In addition, some of the savings from residential bed reduction will be applied toward front-end community based programs and save taxpayers money while still maintaining public safety. It is essential that where residential capacity is reduced, resources are reallocated to community-based alternative

services to meet the needs of the youth in the least restrictive setting while maintaining public safety.

With less demand on residential services and as resources become available, DJJ will ensure that contracted services are funded to increase specialized services through new procurements, as well as shift resources from residential to:

- **Community-based sanctions** that hold youth accountable, protect public safety, enhance educational opportunities, create jobs, and promote healthy futures for youth. ........................................... Ongoing
- **Assessment-driven, evidence-, and research-based treatment** that addresses needs early in a youths' offending careers, before they escalate to more serious behaviors. Through early intervention we can further reduce the demand for costly, oftentimes inappropriate, residential placements, and create a cycle of tax savings, increased public safety, and young lives turned around. .................................................................................................................... Ongoing
- **Specific front-end prevention, intervention, diversion, and intensive home and community-based services tailored to girls.** While girls make up a smaller portion of the juvenile justice system and pose a lower risk to society than boys, their needs are no less and are often greater. Girls have a unique set of needs and require interventions designed specifically to meet those needs........................................... Ongoing

### Shift investments from reduced secure detention populations to alternatives to detention during FY 2012-2013.

Reducing the number of youth inappropriately placed in secure detention will save money which can be redirected to more effective community-based services. These services will give judges more options for appropriate alternatives to secure detention that provide youth and families opportunities to participate in services together. This will also result in a significant cost savings to the public.

An alternative to secure detention contract was executed to The Florida Network on January 22, 2013, to provide management and administrative oversight of a respite care services program for youth 10 to 18 years of age who have been charged with an offense of domestic violence (including youth who have been previously adjudicated for other issues) ................................................................................................................................................. Completed

### Realign FY 2013-14 budget structure.

Realignment of DJJ’s budget will provide greater flexibility in front-end, community-based programs. Funds and staffing that are more diversionary in nature will be moved to the prevention budget entity. This will allow resources to be allocated to the most needed services throughout the front-end of the system. By shifting the focus and resources to the front end, youth will be kept out of its deeper end and receive treatment and services in their homes and communities. ................................................................................................................................................. Completed
At the request of DJJ, both the Governor and Legislature approved a realignment of budget entities within Probation and Community Corrections. Effective July 1, 2013, the three entities of Aftercare/Conditional Release, Juvenile Probation, and Non-Residential Delinquency Rehabilitation will be replaced by Community Supervision and Community Intervention and Services. These changes place DJJ’s funding structure in line with the goals of the Roadmap by making services more easily identifiable with an emphasis on community-based interventions and supervision. This budget structure emphasizes juvenile justice reform that focuses on front-end diversion and intervention services that ensure youth do not penetrate the system more deeply than necessary while providing the right services, in the right place, in the right way, and at the right time. ................................................................. Completed, effective July 1, 2013

Ensure that prevention and diversion efforts provide services to keep youth out of the juvenile justice system are more cost effective and increase public safety.

Federal grant applications are being reviewed to ensure their scope of services supports DJJ’s mission to divert youth from the juvenile justice system. Funds will be allocated for prevention, diversion, and Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) efforts. Services will focus on youth who may be at risk for arrest due to behaviors such as substance abuse and experimentation, poor academics, negative peer association, family difficulties, environmental challenges, school attendance, anger management, running away, and mental health issues. ....................... Ongoing

Increase transition services by eliminating aftercare contracts, absorbing the supervisory component of aftercare within DJJ, and reinvesting the entire funding in additional contracted, community-based transition services.

To increase the opportunities for success for youth who transition from residential placement, DJJ will begin posting an Invitation(s) to Negotiate for additional transitional services. Current contracts for CBIS/Conditional Release services will be replaced with in-house JPO supervision that costs approximately two-thirds less per day. Approximately $11.7 million in contracted dollars will be reinvested into the private sector to attain needed transitional and re-entry services that will increase successful outcomes for youth returning to the community from residential commitments. ................................................................. December 2012-July 2013

Examine the proportion of referred youth that are Serious, Violent, and Chronic offenders.

In order to appropriately allocate resources for each step along the continuum of services from prevention, diversion, probation, through residential placement and transition, it is important to know the proportion of youth that are appropriate for each level of placement. DJJ has
examined the proportion of youth that are serious (have a history of a felony arrest), violent (have a history of a felony offense against another person), and chronic (have a history of four or more “arrests”) offenders. DJJ has examined the last five complete fiscal years, and found a relatively consistent proportion of youth that are serious (55%), violent (29%), or chronic (15%). Fortunately, the proportion of youth that are SVC is approximately 9%, a relatively small percentage of youth. However, youth most at risk, and the ones requiring the most intense, deep-end services and resources, are those that are serious, violent, AND chronic (SVC). Knowledge of this proportion can better assist DJJ with resource allocation strategies to appropriately place youth based on their risk and needs. Prevention efforts are critical to reducing the proportion of youth that become SVC offenders.

- Conduct SVC analysis ........................................................................................................ Completed
- Develop a strategy for reducing this population .................................................................July 2014

**Recommend changes to Chapter 985, Florida Statutes concerning DJJ operations for the 2014 legislative session.**

DJJ maintains authority to operate under Chapter 985 of the Florida Statutes. Each year DJJ proposes legislative updates and new initiatives. Prior to the 2013 legislative session, DJJ obtained input from stakeholders and proposed changes to the Boards’ and Councils’ structure. DJJ’s Boards & Councils legislation (House Bill 617) was signed into law on June 5, 2013, and streamlines Florida’s system of juvenile justice Boards and Councils into 20 Circuit Advisory Boards that are directly (statutorily) linked to the agency. It re-designates juvenile justice Circuit Boards as juvenile justice Circuit Advisory Boards and removes provisions relating to the establishment of juvenile justice County Councils.

The revised composition of those 20 Circuit Advisory Boards creates a system that ensures every Florida county has multiple representatives. Additionally, the new composition of the Circuit Advisory Boards ensures consistent representation from county commissions, sheriffs, police chiefs, workforce boards, state attorneys, public defenders, judges and the educational community – all critical stakeholders in Florida’s juvenile justice system.

Since 2012, DJJ has been reviewing Chapter 985 with the goal of bringing the statutes in line with current practices, as well as the initiatives presented in this Roadmap. Florida Statutes that govern DJJ must incorporate best practices in order to help reduce the number of youth within the juvenile justice system and allow them to be better served in their communities. It is imperative that state law enables DJJ and its stakeholders to provide the right service, to the right youth, in the right way, at the right time.

DJJ will continue to reach out to juvenile justice stakeholders around the state for comment about how the juvenile justice system works in Florida. This is an all-inclusive and open process that will help shape DJJ’s legislative proposals for the 2014 legislative session. Anyone who would like to participate in these discussions may contact us at [http://www.djj.state.fl.us/get-involved/the-future-of-juvenile-justice](http://www.djj.state.fl.us/get-involved/the-future-of-juvenile-justice).
The general timeline is as follows:

- Develop draft and seek feedback from stakeholders ............................................. June - August 2013
- Refine draft ........................................................................................................... August-September 2013
- Seek feedback ...................................................................................................... October 2013 – January 2014
New Additions to the Roadmap

Feedback Becomes Plans

DJJ is grateful to those who expressed their suggestions and enabled us to enhance the Roadmap. We appreciate your input.

Areas where the Roadmap was supplemented include:

- Expanded introductory information: necessity, outcomes, creation, how changes will be permanent
- Table of Contents
- Executive Summary
- Endorsements
- More data and statistics
- Examples distinguishing between risk levels of and sanctions for youth
- Prevention efforts for special populations: girls, disabled, dependent, truant, and younger youth
- Identification of the risks and needs of at-risk youth (PAT pre- and post-assessment)
- Measures for preventing youth from going deeper in the system
- Prevention awareness activities, such as community conversations
- Faith-based Community strategic plan
- Mentoring opportunities, including connecting every youth in residential with a mentor throughout their placement and transition
- Gender responsive ways to prevent girls and boys from entering the system
- Resources for schools to prevent truancy
- Civil Citation efforts directed toward over-represented populations
- Training for law enforcement
- Prevention and diversion through education efforts: family engagement and involvement, JPOs in schools, minority and disabled youth over-representation
- Services for youth younger than 12 years old
• Increased alternatives to secure detention: Neighborhood Accountability Boards, Evening Reporting Centers
• Human Trafficking victim identification and services
• Expansion of the DRAI scoring adjustment and JDAI to Pinellas County
• Expansion of and improvement of the oversight for electronic monitoring
• Collaborative plan with judges to reduce Failures to Appear
• Violations of Probation: notifying law enforcement, analyzing gender differences, and examining chronic misdemeanants
• Expanded life skills training
• Comprehensive family engagement initiative
• Gender-specific services
• Trauma-Informed Care environments and services
• Vocational programs and certification
• Improving behavior management systems to limit solitary confinement
• Physical response training improvements
• Expansion of Juvenile Assessment Centers
• Property offenders
• Placement decisions
• Residential commitment gender responsivity
• Juvenile Diversion Alternatives Program
• Validation of the residential needs and risks assessment tool.
• Increased availability for community mental health and substance abuse services
• Increased communication and collaboration
  o Feedback gathering sessions
  o Coordinated services and information sharing with other state agencies about youth in the delinquency, dependency, and welfare systems
  o Coordination with child protective investigations
  o Partnering with workforce providers
  o Building better relationships with private providers, court, and law enforcement personnel
  o Stakeholder training
  o Online data reports
• Twenty-one Reform Specialist positions
• Internal reviews at detention centers
• Shared Services Model
• Examining serious, violent, and chronic offenders
• Legislative changes: Civil Citation, Juvenile records, County Cost Share
• Ways to get information and get involved

Conclusion

The Roadmap outlines some of the efforts being undertaken at DJJ in order to inform and involve all stakeholders.

It is a thoughtful reform plan based on data and research.
It is a plan that individualizes each youth’s care, services, and treatment.
It is a plan that is more inclusive of DJJ’s partners.
It is an evolving plan as continual feedback is encouraged.

It is a plan to do what is right: Provide the right services, to the right youth, in the right way, at the right time.

“The Roadmap to System Excellence is a bold plan... Then again, it’s simply common sense.”
Tallahassee Democrat
How to get involved…

Learn more about the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice and its Roadmap to System Excellence or contact us in any of the following ways. Feedback and questions are always welcome at DJJ.

Thank you for your interest in improving Florida’s youth, families, and communities.
Florida Department of Juvenile Justice Circuits (numbered), Counties (named), and Juvenile Assessment Centers (starred)