

**Cook County, Illinois
Probation System Review
Final Report**

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**Produced for
Cook County Juvenile Probation, Court Services and Juvenile Court**

Presented by the:

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I. BACKGROUND

A. Probation System Review Design and Framework

In a continuing effort to enhance policy, practice and service provision for the youth and families involved with Cook County Juvenile Probation and Court Services (hereafter referred to as Cook County Juvenile Probation), a comprehensive probation system review was undertaken. The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center and the Robert F. Kennedy National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice (RFK NRC) chose Cook County Juvenile Probation through a competitive selection process to be one of two sites across the nation to receive this comprehensive review as articulated below. This project was funded through the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Second Chance Act Smart on Juvenile Justice: Community Supervision Grant in partnership with the Cook County Juvenile Probation leadership and relevant interested stakeholders. The analytic probation system evaluation began in June 2018 and concluded in April 2019. A consultant team consisting of members from both CSG Justice Center and the RFK NRC (hereafter referred to as the Consultant Team) partnered to conduct of the analysis. The process included a review and examination of policy, practice, and service provision designed to inform immediate opportunities for system enhancement, improvement, and reform.

The specific design of the review was supported by the experience of the Council of State Governments Justice Center and their long history of guiding states towards improved juvenile justice practices and policies and the RFK National Resource Center's 2016 publication entitled *Probation System Review Guidebook, 2nd edition*.² The overarching purpose for this review was to assist Cook County Juvenile Probation to develop a long-term plan for comprehensive juvenile justice system improvement and identify opportunities for enhanced probation performance based on best practice standards concentrated on the following:

- effective programmatic practices;
- effective and efficient court and probation management performance;
- improved recognition of the neuroscience of adolescent development and adoption of the principles and hallmarks of a developmental approach to address youth risk and treatment needs;
- improved utilization of evidence-based practices and intervention services; and
- implementation of enhanced prevention and early intervention and interagency approaches for youth and families with risks and needs in multiple domains

This report begins by describing the methodologies used in the assessment of Cook County's Probation System followed by laying the research foundation for the forthcoming recommendations. The results

² Tuell, John A., and Harp, Kari L. (2016) *Probation System Review Guidebook, 2nd edition*. Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps.

of the assessment are then summarized briefly followed by specific findings and recommendations focusing on the following areas of practice:

- Diversion and Detention
- Assessments and Dispositions
- Supervision and Services

Following the body of the report is a complete list of twenty-seven recommendations. Also attached are appendices that directly influenced the findings and recommendations. The Consultant Team strongly recommends that readers review the three PowerPoint presentations in the appendices to understand the broader context of how the system operates and the detailed, case-level data analysis that guided the recommendations. The PowerPoint presentations were publicly presented to staff, leadership, judges, and community stakeholders, and the findings and recommendations within were discussed in detail with all relevant stakeholders. Therefore, this report seeks to consolidate what has already been identified and shared as key challenges and strategies for system improvement during the dynamic period of review and analysis over the last year with Cook County Juvenile Probation.

II. METHODOLOGIES

A. Focus Areas of the Review

The system review included a specific concentration on administration and management practices in Cook County Juvenile Probation and highlighting the historical and current environment for reform. Within that overarching analysis, the system review focused on three primary aspects of juvenile justice system operations, functions and performance:

- Referrals and Diversion
- Detention, Assessments, and Disposition
- Supervision and Services

Within each of these areas, the Consultant Team sought to assess to what extent court, probation, state's attorney's, public defenders, law enforcement and other stakeholder's policies, practices, and resource allocations aligned with current science related to juvenile justice system improvement and positive youth outcomes. The CSG Justice Center, based on an analysis of the current research has adopted four core principles shown by research for improving youth outcomes:

- 1) Use of **validated risk and needs assessments** to guide supervision, service, and resource allocation decisions.
- 2) Implementation of **research-based and promising programs and services** that are proven to reduce recidivism and improve a variety of other youth outcomes, and evaluation of the results of these services through effective data collection and analysis.

- 3) Employing ***a cross system and collaborative approach*** to address youth's needs.
- 4) Employing what is known about ***adolescent development to guide policies, programs and supervision practices***.³

These four core principles and the following research foundations for sustainable best practice have guided the development of the strategies and recommendations made in this report and **must** continue to support Cook County Juvenile Probation's future implementation of these recommendations.

B. Research Foundations for Sustainable Policy and Practice

The goals, practices, policies, outcomes, and operations of a juvenile justice system and its affiliated youth serving partners **must** also be informed by the established body of research and knowledge about adolescent development⁴. The research that was effectively synthesized in the 2013 National Research Council report recognized that adolescents differ from adults in three important ways:

- Adolescents are less able to regulate their own behavior in emotionally charged contexts.
- Adolescents are more sensitive to external influences such as the presence of peers and the immediacy of rewards.
- Adolescents are less able to make informed decisions that require consideration of the long term.⁵

These adolescent characteristics provide the foundation for the adoption and implementation of developmentally informed practices, policies and procedures that have proven effective in achieving the primary responsibilities of the juvenile justice system, which include accountability, prevention of re-offending, and fairness and equitable treatment. These are highlighted in the body of this Probation System Review Final Report to reinforce the critical framework underlying the transformational actions of the Cook County Juvenile Probation Department leadership and staff, and to serve as a roadmap for the areas of practice and policy that must consistently be implemented, sustained and measured to ensure fidelity and continuous quality improvement.

Unfortunately, and all too frequently still in current practice, the goals, design, and operation of the juvenile justice system are not informed by this growing body of research. As a result, the outcomes are more likely to be negative interactions between youth and justice system officials, increased disrespect for the law and legal authority, and the reinforcement of a deviant identity and social disaffection.⁶ The

³ Core Principles for Reducing Recidivism and Improving Other Outcomes for Youth in the Juvenile Justice System. July 2014. Council of State Governments Justice Center.

⁴ Tuell, John A.; Heldman, Jessica; Harp, Kari (2017) *Developmental Reform in Juvenile Justice: Translating the Science of Adolescent Development to Sustainable Best Practice*. Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps.

⁵ Committee on Law and Justice; Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education; National Research Council. *Reforming Juvenile Justice: A Developmental Approach*, Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2013.

⁶ Ibid.

challenge going forward for Cook County Juvenile Probation includes increasing the numbers and variance of system practitioners who understand and embrace the research findings and implications; advancing the implementation of systemic youth and family intervention practices across the spectrum of key decision points directly impacting the primary goals of the juvenile justice system; and improving quality assurance methodologies that ensure fidelity to these principles and practices.

Upon closer examination of the origins of the research over the past decade, there is evidence of significant changes in brain structure and function during the period of adolescence⁷ that has resulted in a strong consensus among neuroscientists about the nature of these changes. Much of this work has resulted from advances in magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) techniques that provide the opportunity to track the development of brain structure, brain function, and brain connectivity in humans.⁸ The evidence suggests that the three previously highlighted cognitive tendencies are linked to the biological immaturity of the brain and an imbalance among developing brain systems. Simply stated, the brain system that influences pleasure-seeking and emotional reactivity develops more rapidly than the system that supports self-control. This fact leaves adolescents less capable of self-regulation than adults.⁹

Another key aspect of the research findings from *Reforming Juvenile Justice: A Developmental Approach* has significant implications for initial juvenile justice system responses and the consideration of alternatives to formal processing and diversion opportunities. Specifically, the research shows that for most youths the period of risky experimentation does not extend beyond adolescence, ceasing as identity settles with maturity.¹⁰ The vast majority of youths who are arrested or referred to juvenile court have not committed serious offenses, and more than half of them appear in the system only once.

Additionally, both the seriousness and likelihood of offending are also strongly affected by influences in youths' environment — peers, parents, schools, and communities. While these firmly established research findings must practically inform the juvenile justice system and its affiliated partners, it does not suggest any change to the established primary responsibilities or aims of the juvenile justice system. Those responsibilities remain to:

- 1) hold youths accountable for wrongdoing
- 2) prevent further offending, and
- 3) treat all youth with fairness and equity.

Within these responsibilities for Cook County Juvenile Probation **and its partners**, the research strongly supports that focusing on the positive social development of youth can enhance and assure the

⁷ Scientifically, adolescence has no precise chronological onset or endpoint. It refers to a phase in development between childhood and adulthood beginning at puberty, typically about 12 or 13, and ending in the late teens or early twenties. Generally speaking, when referring to an adolescent the focus is on those persons under age 18.

⁸ Steinberg, L., Adolescent development and juvenile justice. *Annual Review Clinical Psychology*, 5, 459-485 (2009).

⁹ Committee on Law and Justice; Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education; National Research Council. *Reforming Juvenile Justice: A Developmental Approach*, Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2013.

¹⁰ Ibid.

protection of public safety. An examination of these responsibilities reflects their compatibility with the developmental approach to juvenile justice.

Accountability

It is imperative that our juvenile justice systems provide an opportunity for youths to accept responsibility for their actions and make amends to individual victims and the community. This focus ensures that offenders are answerable for wrongdoing, particularly in cases in which there is harm to person and/or property.

Preventing Reoffending

The best practice approach to reduce re-offending includes the commitment to the use of structured decision-making instruments that informs professional judgement at key decision points (e.g., risks-needs-responsivity [RNR] tools). In the case process this includes referral/intake, diversion or alternative responses, adjudication, disposition and case planning.¹¹ These scientifically validated tools and instruments can identify whether a youth is at low, moderate or high risk to re-offend.

Further, RNR assessment tools (e.g., Ohio Youth Assessment System [OYAS], AKA JRA, etc.) may be used to assess for the specific needs of the youth in identified domains (family, peers, behavioral health, education, etc.) and permit a more effective matching of treatment and programmatic interventions that will ameliorate the risk to re-offend. If implemented effectively the use of RNR tools effectively target specific evidence-based interventions (e.g., specific therapeutic interventions such as aggression replacement therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy) that reduce reoffending and produce fiscal returns relative to their costs/youth.

Fairness and Equitable Treatment

The third aim requires that youth are treated fairly through the assurance that due process laws and procedures are protected for every youth and family involved in the juvenile court process. Fundamentally, this includes equal certainty that all youths have access to and are represented by properly trained defense counsel and that all youth have an opportunity to participate in the juvenile justice system proceedings. The fairness standard also applies to the practice of swift justice. An adherence to standards and timelines for case processing is critical in that the juvenile justice process is designed to teach offenders that illegal behavior has consequences and that anyone who violates the law will be held accountable.

The RFK National Resource Center thus asserts that emerging from these primary areas of responsibility is the need to prioritize the following areas of practice within their enhanced approaches as Cook County Juvenile Probation advances their transformation plan toward the highest level of achievement:

¹¹ Tuell, John A., and Harp, Kari L. (2016) *Probation System Review Guidebook, 2nd edition*. Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps.

Collaborative Leadership

As youth serving agencies often face the steady stream of immediate crises, it is frequently a challenge to incorporate time and attention to the nurturance of important professional partnerships. This can lead to a fragmentation of effort among the very well-meaning service professionals that undermines accomplishment of goals, objectives and outcomes that benefit the youth and families we serve. With varying missions and mandates, it is also frequently easy to argue for this separatist practice to continue even as we fail as a community of service practitioners to realize positive outcomes. The underlying premise for a developmental approach to juvenile justice system reform (e.g., less capacity for self-regulation, heightened sensitivity to peer pressure, and less ability to make judgements that require future orientation) provides the strongest case yet for system partners to find common ground around which a strong collaborative foundation can be built. With this strong scientific basis, our professional practitioners can collectively recognize that during this period of adolescence, our youth actively engage in risky decision-making in relation to authority at home, in school and in the community.

Collaboration is not merely a concept; rather it is a dynamic and detailed set of connected actions, including routinized evidence-based communication strategies and methods, among all critical agency and system partners, but particularly among the Cook County Juvenile Probation Department, Judges, State's Attorney's, and the Public Defender's. It is not accomplished episodically, but routinely through the development and adoption of policies, procedures and protocols that are effectively overseen by the persons who comprise the collaborative partnership.

Risks-Needs-Responsivity (RNR) Tools

After more than two decades of research that confirmed the efficacy of scientifically validated structured decision-making tools to screen and assess for risk to re-offending, there is still a significant gap between the research and practice. In view of the neuroscience of adolescents, instead of basing sanctions solely on the offense, a more effective approach is to assess each youth's risk for reoffending and reserve the most intensive monitoring and interventions (including both therapeutic services and sanctions) for those at highest risk. In addition, evidence suggests that the best results come from matching services to youths' specific "dynamic risk factors"—that is, risk factors that can be changed, such as substance abuse, poor school achievement, decision-making skill deficits, or lack of parental monitoring. Further, with a strong commitment to the RNR tools, juvenile justice system practitioners can more effectively target positive youth development opportunities that focus on increasing competency and cognitive skills development.

A growing number of jurisdictions that have effectively implemented and sustained fidelity of RNR practices have evidence that the approach has significant positive impact on juvenile justice system performance and protection of public safety. The improved system performance is demonstrated by the increased diversion of low-risk offenders from formal involvement in the juvenile justice system and the exchange of relevant information among prosecutors, public defenders and judges that permit more timely case processing and informed dispositions. The positive impact on public safety is reflected in the reduction of recidivism and corresponding improvements in cognitive skills and positive youth development.

Trauma Screening & Treatment

The growing awareness of the effect of trauma has led to the need for interventions that take into account the relevance of trauma in the lives of youth with behavior problems and potential involvement in the juvenile justice and related youth-serving systems.¹² The first step to identify appropriate interventions is the identification of youth for whom trauma-based treatment is necessary. Consistent with the field's concerns, a recent Attorney General's Report has urged all child-serving organizations to "train their staff to identify, screen, and assess children for exposure to violence".¹³ Together with trauma-based interventions, methods to specifically screen and assess youth for trauma-based concerns are critical to improving the likelihood for successful behavior change and amelioration of risk to reoffend. The point of emphasis is not merely to acknowledge that youth have high likelihood of trauma events in their life, made higher by those in the child welfare and juvenile justice system, but also the routine need to identify active trauma symptoms. This practice requires a systematic approach to screening through the use of a validated instrument; expedited availability of clinical assessment where the risk indicates need; targeted, evidence-based treatment interventions with appropriately licensed clinicians; and training of youth-serving staff to appropriate methods of interaction and recognition of trauma responses.

Graduated Response / Sanctions

A strong system of "graduated responses" – combining sanctions for violations and incentives for continued progress – can significantly reduce unnecessary incarceration or other out-of-home placements, reduce racial and ethnic disparities, and improve successful probation completion rates and other outcomes for youth under supervision. There is compelling evidence that the juvenile justice system and its partners should incorporate this practice at key decision points affecting the trajectory of the youth into and out of system involvement. An effectively implemented system of responses and incentives may reduce harmful effects of confinement while holding the youth appropriately accountable. It is a "cardinal tenet of our justice system that punishment should be proportional to the offending behavior and evidence is now available from many criminal justice and youth-serving contexts that using incentives more frequently than sanctions is most likely to achieve behavior change."¹⁴

Positive Youth Development

Yet another practice that can be directly informed by the research about adolescent development involves commitment to the concepts related to positive youth development (PYD). This approach erodes the deficit-based approach that dominates many of our juvenile justice and probation system paradigms for case management and acknowledges that youth are capable of stabilizing maladaptive behaviors if they can be attached to a variety of social resources that facilitate healthy development. In the past decade, concentrating on positive youth development goals has provided the juvenile justice

¹² Grisso, T. & Vincent, G. (2014). Trauma in Dual Status Youth: Putting Things in Perspective. Boston: Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps. <http://rfknrcj.org/resources/trauma/>

¹³ Report of the Attorney General's National Task Force on Children Exposed to Violence. (2012). Washington DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. <https://www.justice.gov/defendingchildhood/cev-rpt-full.pdf>

¹⁴ Center for Children's Law and Policy. (2016). Graduated Responses Toolkit: New Resources and Insights to Help Youth Succeed on Probation. Washington, DC. <http://www.cclp.org/graduated-responses-toolkit/>

system with a compelling framework for service delivery, especially in cases involving younger juveniles and those charged with less serious crimes. The PYD essentially asserts that reducing offending means not simply restricting opportunities to offend but expanding opportunities to grow. The practices associated with an effective PYD approach support development of more mature patterns of thinking, reasoning, and decision-making.¹⁵

In combination with the appropriate use of RNR approaches, case management plans can incorporate PYD opportunities into the strategies that strengthen cognitive skills and positive assets which help to ameliorate risk in the priority domains for treatment and intervention.

Case Processing Timeline Standards

It is well documented that delays in the processing of youth through the justice system can have negative results not only for the youth themselves but also for their families and communities. Improving the timeliness of the justice process is “far more than a technical matter for managers and judges; it is a critical part of policy and practice in ensuring the juvenile justice system fulfills its basic mission.”¹⁶ The qualitative research findings on successful adoption of adherence to these improved practices highlighted two common themes:

- Success in addressing court delay requires leadership in the form of a court culture that is committed to case management, and
- Routine and shared communication is vital for any successful case management system, no matter how automated that system may be.

These revised practices require collaboration from the key system actors and include judges, prosecutors, defense counsel, court administrators, and court/probation staff at a minimum.

Family Involvement and Engagement

The active engagement and involvement of families, which by definition must include the nuclear, single parent and extended family units, must 1) be based on their strengths and assets, and 2) must provide for an active role and partnership in the development, implementation and management of comprehensive treatment plans for their children. Adolescent youth rely on the family, the primary natural support, to provide guidance, instruction and nurturance no matter the level of dysfunction and our efforts must seek to enhance and not supplant that support system in both the short- and long-term. The research is clear that absent the meaningful engagement and involvement of families in our planning and interventions there is a decreased likelihood of achieving the positive outcomes we seek for our youth.

¹⁵ *Programs that Promote Positive Development Can Help Young Offenders Grow Up and Out of Crime*. Research on Pathways to Desistance. Issue Brief. The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, 2014.

¹⁶ National Institute of Justice & Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. (2014). Delays in Youth Justice. Justice Research. <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/237149.pdf>

The foundation of the Probation System Review and the findings and recommendations contained herein is built upon the belief that when this research and the associated principles and practices are effectively applied to the primary areas of responsibility (accountability, preventing re-offending, and fairness and equitable treatment) of the juvenile justice system and its affiliated partners, the Cook County Juvenile Probation will experience a **higher likelihood** of achieving its mission, goals, objectives and outcomes. The achievement of these outcomes is a shared community responsibility (e.g., the community of public and private actors and organizations).

C. Current Environment for System Enhancement

It is noteworthy that Cook County Juvenile Probation has been a strong historical partner in the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) for nearly two decades. The result of those efforts has ultimately produced significant reductions in the detention population and considerably more alternatives to secure placement available to juvenile court stakeholders. While this progress is laudable, limited sustained attention was directed at community supervision approaches consistent with the emerging research on adolescent development, effective use of structured decision making relying on scientifically validated risk-needs-responsivity instruments, and probation case management approaches that balanced supervision and oversight with effective approaches to positive behavioral change to ameliorate risk for re-offending. Additionally, this absence of progressive transformation of field-based probation practice was occurring in a community environment featuring intensifying gun violence and prolific gang activity. The current juvenile probation staff has extensive experience; over half of the staff has been with the department for 16 years or more. As is common in many juvenile probation departments in which this probation system review has been conducted, experienced field-based probation staff has not fully embraced the practice change environment promoted over the past three to five years by the current management team. This practice environment and resistance to change, particularly in a department this large, has presented significant obstacles to the change management process initiated by the Cook County Juvenile Probation Director and his leadership team.

The Cook County Juvenile Probation Management Team (Management Team) convened in October 2016 to determine what reforms were needed to occur to align with current research and best practice standards. The Management Team initially sought to describe the “current assessment/intake process; levels of service; case planning; probation interventions; structured enhanced contacts; intermediate rewards and sanctions; and Progress Update review, while comparatively looking at our current landscape.” The Management Team analyzed departmental data; reviewed juvenile justice research and best practices; facilitated focus groups with staff; participated in national conferences and explored other similar jurisdictions to address the following three departmental objectives:

- Design an evidenced-based intake process for youth utilizing principles of risk, need and responsivity to identify classification for service delivery.
- Identify effective evidence-based interventions which promote change and accountability while maintaining the integrity of services provided to ensure a continuity of care which addresses minors changing needs.

- Develop, Track, Measure and Report the performance

The product developed by the Management Team in 2017 included a “whitepaper” (titled *Cook County Juvenile Probation 2.0*) which sought to inform and guide the Cook County Juvenile Probation Department’s aim to enhance existing efforts to incorporate researched methods of practice to accelerate positive youth outcomes. The Management Team created the **Management Objectives and Accountability Team** (commonly referred to as MOAT) which outlined a strategic approach to protecting public safety, improving behaviors, promoting accountability, and demonstrating how everyone contributes to the results. The recommendations allow for efficient use of available resources that comport with current best practices in the field. The proposal for action therein included the following underlying premises:

- Youth desire to do well and succeed
- We are more alike than different
- All behavior has a purpose
- People do the best they can with the resources available to them
- The family is vital in the rehabilitation process

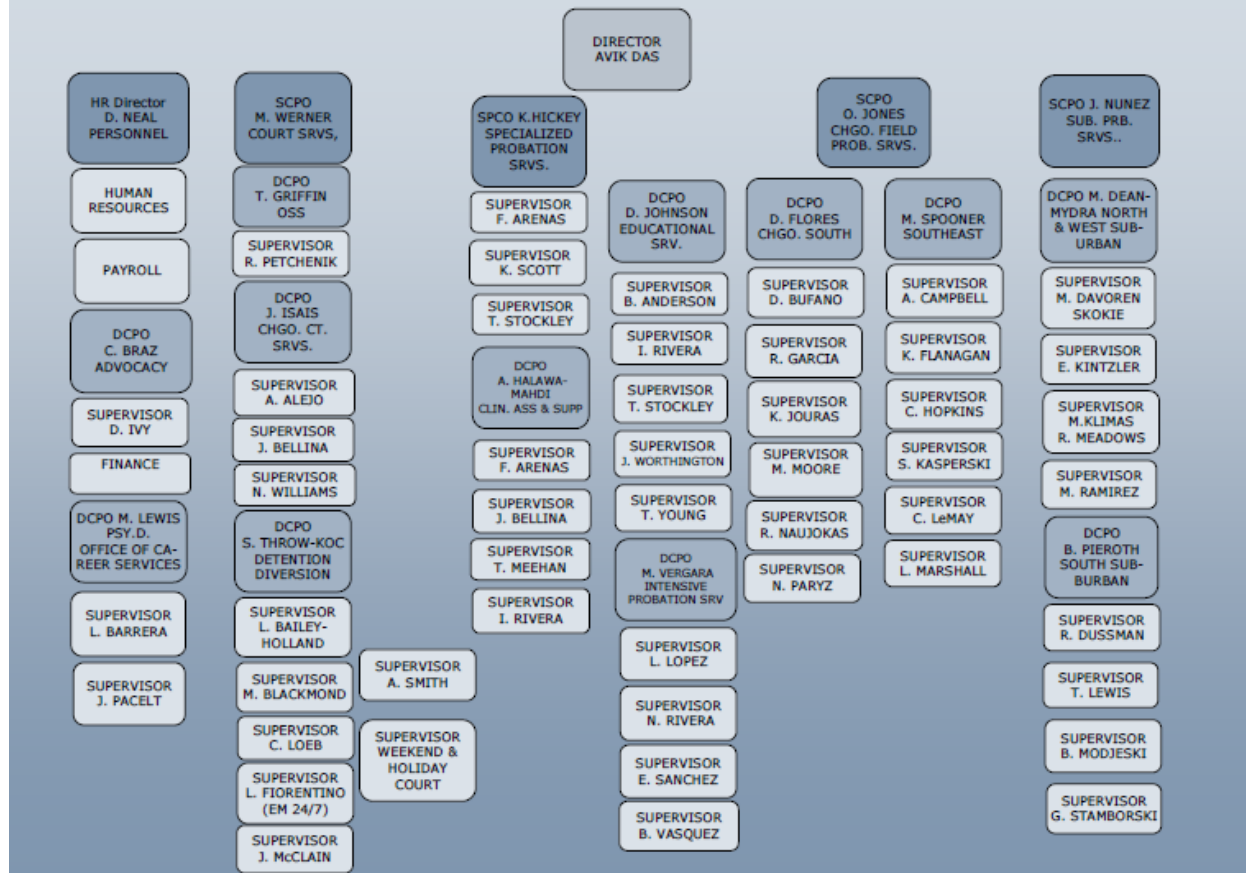
The conclusion of the report recommended adoption in principle of the proposed changes and initiated detailed planning to support full scale implementation of the reforms. In 2017, specific MOAT Teams were established to drive action steps in each of the three departmental objectives.

It is within this context that Juvenile Probation Director Avik Das extended the invitation to the RFK NRC and CSG to conduct this intensive probation system review. It must be noted the Consultant Team was granted unlimited access to all staff, key collaborative stakeholders, and all policy documents and resource materials during the conduct of the review and analysis. Director Das and his Management Team are to be congratulated for their courage and commitment to permit this unlimited examination of current practice toward the goal of enhancing management, probation and court methods to achieve their commitment to improved youth outcomes.

D. Assessment Scope and Organizational Structure

The Cook County Juvenile Probation and Court Service Department implemented organizational structure changes effective October 2018 and additional changes during the course of this review. The Probation System Review (PSR) focused primarily on the operations overseen by each of the newly created Section Chief Probation Officers (SCPO’s) as depicted in the chart below. A more detailed Organizational Chart was also provided that includes each probation staff person managed by each of the Supervisory personnel identified in the chart below. That detailed chart (17 pages in length) is not included in this report but is a part of the files examined during the course of the review and was utilized to identify the place and role in the Department for each employee who participated in the multiple interviews and focus groups during the PSR.

**CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY JUVENILE PROBATION AND COURT SERVICES
6/18/2019**



Assessment Methods

The Consultant Team employed an interactive consultation process designed to assist and support, not supplant, the authority, talents, current initiatives, and work of leaders within Cook County Juvenile Probation. The following methodologies were used to conduct the review:

Routine Meetings with a Designated Project Leadership Team

Site visits were conducted on the following dates:

- July 17-19, 2018
- September 26-28, 2018
- November 11, 2018 (Meeting with Judges only)
- December 5-7, 2018
- February 13-14, 2019
- April 10-11, 2019

During the on-site visits, regularly scheduled meetings with the Juvenile Probation Management Team were convened to provide direction for the execution of the work plan, provide access to designated personnel, discuss and assess the progress of the review and analysis, and to offer dynamic suggestions

to address preliminary themes or findings as the system review progressed. This methodology permitted opportunities for remedial action without waiting for the final report.

During the PSR, a Task Force, serving the role usually designated as the Probation System Review Team (PSRT) was created. The Task Force consisted of Cook County Juvenile Probation stakeholders and community providers. The Task Force was convened during the site visits and was provided data analysis, key takeaways, and preliminary opportunities for improvement in each of the primary focus areas of the review. The formal presentations to the Task Force were followed by discussions regarding the implications of the preliminary findings and opportunities to solicit input regarding action steps. The Task Force members, numbering more than 30 stakeholders, also included representatives from the Judiciary, State's Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office, Cook County educational representatives, Cook County Department of Children and Family Services, multiple law enforcement police departments, and numerous community provider agency representatives, among others.

Monthly Conference Calls

In addition to the on-site meetings, the Consultant Team held monthly calls with the Cook County Juvenile Probation Management Team to maintain ongoing communication on emerging issues, the direction of the review, and technical assistance support regarding immediate best practice improvements undertaken by Cook County Juvenile Probation during the course of the review.

Document Review

Beginning in May 2018, prior to the first visit, the Consultant Team began a review of foundational documents that set forth the vision, goals, and policies and procedures of the Cook County Juvenile Probation. Throughout the process, documents were requested and reviewed as they related to the primary areas of the review.

Process Mapping

A process mapping exercise was conducted with all probation officers, with follow up discussions taking place separately with probation management. The purpose of this exercise was to analyze interfaces, handoffs, bottlenecks, and other case flow issues in the handling of referred, disposed, and supervised cases. This included a discussion of what information is available at various decision points while identifying perspectives on interagency work processes and opportunities to improve practices in the priority areas for the review.

Employee Survey

An electronic employee survey was disseminated in October 2018 and finalized in January 2019. Invitations and a link to participate in the survey were sent to all Probation staff and supervisors. The survey consisted of 65 multiple choice and 12 open-ended questions. All survey participants were assured anonymity. There was a 60% response rate and the results of the survey were used to further refine the understanding of actual management and probation practices. The results informed the maturation of the findings and the development of the final recommendations.

Data Analysis

The Consultant Team included the expertise of a Data Analyst who worked closely with IT staff and probation leadership to collect existing case-level data, which provided the foundation for the three presentations focused on Referrals/Diversion, Detention/Assessments/Disposition, and Supervision/Services. These data were routinely and transparently shared and discussed with all participants in the review and strongly influenced the recommendations within this report.

Key Stakeholder Focus Groups and Interviews

The Consultant Team conducted extensive focus groups, interviews, conference calls, and routine meetings with all system stakeholders, including Deputy Chief Probation Officers, supervisory probation staff, probation officers and support staff, the JRA Implementation Team, judges, Assistant State's Attorneys, public defenders, law enforcement, school personnel, and service providers.

III. KEY FINDINGS and RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Summary of Key Findings and Recommendations

Cook County Juvenile Probation demonstrated a strong commitment to this review process throughout all levels of the organizational structure. Leadership, staff, and community stakeholders were invested in meeting with the Consultant Team; engaged in dynamic and informative discussions on the findings and recommendations; and demonstrated an interest in improvement in multiple key areas of probation practice and system performance.

The following brief summary of observations and key takeaways from the probation system review process are offered as a preamble to more in-depth presentation of findings and recommendations.

Referrals and Diversion

The data analysis revealed a spike in violent crime over the past five years against growing resource limitations, which have contributed to declining filing rates within the Cook County State's Attorney's office. This is evident particularly for youth who have multiple prior referrals. Unfortunately, youth who have multiple prior referrals are those youth most likely to come back into contact with the juvenile justice system, and are also the population least likely to be diverted to, and thus benefit from, diversionary services and programs. Indeed, the current process of determining diversion eligibility is not based on consistent, objective criteria and/or the use of risk screening tools to identify the youth that represent the greatest risk to public safety. Likewise, while notable efforts are being made to connect youth whose cases are not filed to services, these efforts are limited in scope, not guided by the use of mental health and other needs screening tools, not coordinated across county agencies and service providers, and thus, are likely to have limited effectiveness. This information led to ongoing discussions with representatives from the Cook County State's Attorney's office and leadership from the Juvenile Probation Department during the review to examine enhanced practice methods to improve these areas of referral and diversion practices. The restructuring of the "front end" of Cook County's

juvenile justice system to ensure that youth who have multiple referrals receive the services that they need to address the underlying causes of their delinquent behavior should be a priority for the Probation Department, State's Attorney's Office, and other system stakeholders.

Detention

As noted previously, Cook County Detention Center has experienced a significant population decline over the past five years, and initial detention decisions are made through the use of a validated detention screening tool. At the same time, opportunities may exist to more efficiently use existing alternatives to detention, including streamlining the number used for a specific youth at any given time, fully maximizing the available service capacity of providers, and standardizing coordination and communication protocols across the multiple staff that may be working with youth. Additionally, recent efforts have increased information sharing between probation and detention staff but more collaboration is needed to coordinate the assessment and treatment of youth's mental health, substance use, trauma, and other key needs.

Assessments and Dispositions

The number of Cook County youth that are disposed to supervision, probation, and state commitment have declined substantially. These dispositional options are primarily and increasingly used for youth who have multiple prior referrals and have committed felony offenses. The dispositional decisions are in the preliminary stages of being informed by information on youth's risks and needs using the Juvenile Risk Assessment (JRA) instrument. This instrument replaces the Youth Assessment Screening Instrument (YASI) which had been in practice for the past twenty years in Cook County and the state of Illinois. The Administrative Office of Illinois Courts (AOIC) is providing training and technical assistance to support the implementation of the JRA. The AOIC has produced *The Probation Casework Standards* (January 2019) which reflects collaborative efforts between the Probation Services Division of AOIC and probation professionals throughout the state. The standards detailed within reflect the commitment to effective training and consistent use of the JRA to drive case planning and case management decisions. Despite the best efforts of the Cook County JRA Implementation Team, the transition process within Cook County continues to experience significant challenges within the probation department and among key stakeholders including buy-in, clear policies and procedures, quality assurance, data collection, staff accountability, and communication between the judiciary and probation leadership and staff. Similarly, current data reflects that the time period, or length of probation orders frequently cover 12-36 months and probation requirements are not individualized to youth's risks, needs, or the harm caused to victims and communities. Thus, while the adoption of the JRA provides opportunities to ensure risks/needs information is consistently used to guide supervision and service decisions pre and post disposition, an enhanced implementation, quality assurance, and communication approach is needed to ensure that the JRA implementation is successful.

Supervision and Services

Among the youth under supervisory orders for probation and Intensive Probation Supervision (IPS), more than 50% are re-referred within 12 months. The youth with multiple prior offenses are most likely to be re-referred. These outcomes dictate renewed attention to fundamental probation practice and

the resolution of tensions related to supervision decision-making and approaches to case contacts, case planning, and accountability within and amongst front-line and management staff and other system stakeholders. The re-referral rates are likely also attributable to the corresponding lack of adherence to system and department-wide policies, inconsistent practices, and lack of quality assurance protocols, which present foundational barriers to improving public safety and youth outcomes. The probation system review did reveal existing opportunities to better utilize probation officers' time and deploy related resources more efficiently, including through making more risk-based decisions at multiple points throughout the system. At the same time, the Department is significantly under-resourced and under-staffed—given its size and scope of responsibilities—in the areas of quality assurance and data collection. The establishment of a clear vision for probation practices, guided by concrete policies and practices, and supported and measured through a commitment to quality assurance and performance evaluation is critical to improving supervision outcomes.

Change Management and Communication

The transformation of Cook County Juvenile Probation cannot be successful unless there is a concrete action plan with clear deliverables, timelines, and responsible parties for provoking, supporting, training and coaching all staff—and key collaborative stakeholders- to transition from current to desired practices. This plan must speak to the following pre-requisites for implementation success:

- Executive leadership and support
- Communication and transparency between and amongst leadership, management, and line staff as well as with external stakeholders, particularly the judiciary
- Authentic line staff involvement in the change process and addressing factors that will create resistance to change
- Coordinated policy development, training, and roll-out/implementation approaches
- Ongoing quality assurance, data collection, and continuous quality improvement processes
- Aligning existing financial and staffing resources with new directions, including opportunities to use existing resources more efficiently while also securing additional resources to address critical deficits in department capacity

Amongst all of these elements, the review process highlighted the absolute necessity to develop proactive – not reactive – communication strategies while driving the transformative efforts. There is an abundance of research that reflects the positive outcomes associated with effectively developing and using a *proactive* communications strategy that anticipates staff and stakeholder resistance, miscommunication, and a dynamic environment. While there was ample evidence of communication methods and techniques on display during the probation system review, the actions did not reflect sufficient consistency of transparent, collaborative communication. Department leadership will need to partner with front line staff to develop formal, ongoing mechanisms to ensure that staff feel their views are respected, their opinions are valued, and that they are part of the change management process to promote staff buy-in and create an environment ripe for sustainable change.

B. Referrals and Diversion

The first key area of the Probation System Review focused on the number and nature of referrals and use of diversion in Cook County, focusing on the following key assessment questions:

Referrals: Who are the youth being referred to the juvenile justice system, and are cases handled in a consistent and timely manner?

Diversion: Is consistent, objective criteria used to make diversion decisions with the goal of minimizing system supervision for youth that have a low risk of reoffending?

After a thorough review of the quantitative and qualitative data, the following key findings were identified (see *Appendix A* for data within the PowerPoint presentation):

Referral Findings:

- Similar to multi-year trends in jurisdictions nationwide, Cook County has experienced a significant decline in referrals.
- The demographic composition of referrals has remained relatively unchanged over the last five years except for an increase in older youth; however, the data reflect that youth of color are more likely to be referred than their white peers, and this disparity has increased over the past 5-year period.
- Filing rates in the city and suburbs have declined over the past five years, particularly in 2017 and for youth with multiple prior referrals. In 2017, the filing rates for youth who had one to three prior referrals was similar to the filing rate of youth with more extensive referral histories.

Diversion Findings:

- Diversion staff conducts a risk screening after the diversion decisions are made, and typically make informal referrals to service providers based on their knowledge and experience of available and appropriate services.
- Diversion is typically 90 days; oversight is limited to phone contacts; and staff has limited capacity to engage youth/families and provide case management services.
- Lack of a formalized approach to the use of restorative justice practices to ensure all youth are required to repair any harm to victims/communities and available services are fully utilized.
- Probation, the state's attorney's office, or other parties are not routinely collecting data on or analyzing diversion use, participation, or outcomes.
- Law enforcement is making notable efforts to divert youth from formal system involvement, but is not using a validated risk screening tool to make diversion decisions and has limited resources to connect youth to needed services and provide case management.
- Resource limitations hinder the state attorney's office ability to focus on cases beyond youth who commit violent offenses and a lack of consistent, objective criteria and risk screening tools are used to guide diversion decisions.

- Validated needs screening tools—such as mental health, substance use, and trauma screeners—are not currently used to guide diversion or service decisions.
- All parties express concerns about the limitations of the front end of the juvenile justice system, but there is a lack of trust and formal, sustained collaboration across agencies to establish a shared vision, integrated set of policies and practices, and to determine how resources and expertise across justice agencies (and external funders) could be used more effectively.

DIVERSION RECOMMENDATIONS

Diversion Recommendations
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a shared vision and operational plan across agencies for how the front end of the juvenile justice system should function to effectively protect public safety, and what resources are required to accomplish this goal, and share this proposal with city, county, and private stakeholders/funders. 2. Centralize the intake function for all youth referred to the juvenile justice system in partnership with law enforcement, state’s attorney’s office, and probation—including conducting risk and needs screening; making diversion recommendations; and overseeing diversion services—and consider opportunities for efficiencies given the current station adjustment process (i.e. consider a centralized, streamlined assessment center model). 3. Adopt risk screening tools to objectively identify youth’s risk of reoffending and to guide diversion and supervision decisions accordingly. 4. Adopt mental health, substance use, and/or trauma screening tools to guide diversion decisions, and to match youth with the most appropriate services (in or outside of the juvenile justice system). 5. Establish a more robust continuum of diversion supervision, services, and restorative justice practices, and strengthen diversion program oversight and quality assurance. 6. Establish key diversion performance measures, regularly collect and analyze data on these measures, and produce at least an annual report for all stakeholders on diversion participation and outcomes.

C. Assessments and Dispositions

The second key area of the probation system review focused on the use of detention as well as assessments and dispositions in Cook County. The key questions guiding this part of the review were:

Detention: Is consistent, objective criteria used to make detention decisions with the goal of detaining only youth who are a public safety or at risk for failing to appear at future juvenile court proceedings?

Adjudications/Dispositions: Who is being adjudicated, for what offenses, and what criteria are used to make dispositional decisions that drive case management methods and practices?

Assessments: To what extent are validated assessment tools and other best-practice methods used to guide supervision and service decisions pre- and post- disposition?

After a thorough review of the quantitative and qualitative data the following key findings were identified (see *Appendix B* for data within the PowerPoint presentation):

Detention Findings:

- Initial detention decisions are based on the use of a validated detention screening tool.
- Only approximately five percent of detention decisions are the result of overrides, and overrides are relatively equal to higher/lower levels of security (e.g., secure to non-secure, non-secure to secure, etc.).
- Detention screening staff receives regular training in the use of the detention screening tool, and quality assurance protocols are in place to ensure that the tool is completed accurately and used appropriately.
- There are approximately 20 electronic monitoring officers; an additional cohort of overnight officers; six evening reporting center officers stationed at the centers; and a cohort of expeditors.
- In recent years, the Saura Center and Evening Reporting Centers have been consistently serving fewer youth than their contracted capacity.
- Alternative to detention (ATD) officers are limited in their capacity to conduct home visits and provide supervision/services.
- ATD officers lack a formal system of incentives and graduated responses, and are unable to file violations directly with the court—it's unclear to what extent the state's attorney office files formal violations when ATD staff notify them of youth's noncompliance.
- Youth are receiving a fairly robust assessment of their substance use and mental health needs and services while in detention.
- Probation and detention have recently made progress on improving information sharing on youth's mental health status, but this information exchange is still limited, and does not include other potentially key information on youth's risks and needs. As a result, the court and probation staff lack potentially important information to inform dispositional decisions, case planning, and service delivery.

Assessment Findings:

- Mental health, substance use, and trauma screenings are not currently conducted prior to disposition unless a mental health evaluation is requested by the court (approximately less than five percent of all cases).
- Risk assessment information is not generally used to determine eligibility for intensive probation supervision (IPS); the court often orders youth directly into IPS without such an assessment; and the use of IPS has not increased despite the more challenging profile of youth being placed on probation.

- Front line staff have generally not valued the use of risk and needs assessments (YASI) as a youth/family engagement, case planning, or service matching tool, and seen its completion as purely an administrative requirement.
 - Approximately 40 percent of youth placed on supervision and probation have a missing risk assessment.
- Training on the purpose of risk/needs assessments, and quality assurance to ensure assessments are completed, completed with fidelity, and the results are used appropriately, has been limited.
- Data collection, analysis, and reporting on risk/needs assessment results and whether youth are being matched to the right level, length, and type of supervision and services accordingly has been limited. Similarly, risk and needs assessment data has not been used as a service and resource planning tool.
- Probation master trainers are actively training supervisors and front-line staff in the JRA, and feedback from the training has been positive. An implementation committee of front-line staff and supervisors has been established to promote improved JRA use and QA.
- Probation leadership is working hard to establish the preconditions necessary for the successful implementation of the JRA, but key gaps remain:
 - Robust scoring and quality assurance protocols to ensure the tool is scoring accurately given the particular nuances of Cook County's juvenile justice system, and that officers are scoring the tool accurately.
 - Formal strategy/plan for ongoing engagement and education for judges, attorneys, and service providers and obtaining their buy-in and establishing protocols for using the JRA pre and post disposition.
 - Formal strategy/plan for ongoing engagement/involvement of supervisors and front-line staff to obtain their buy-in for using the JRA and troubleshooting operational challenges.
 - Formal strategy/plan for establishing a cohesive policy, quality assurance, and data infrastructure to ensure the JRA is completed and used appropriately.

Disposition Findings:

- The number of youth placed on probation has declined almost 40 percent; the majority, and an increasing proportion, have committed felony offenses and have multiple priors.
- The majority of youth receive probation sentences greater than 12 months and approximately a third receive more than 24 months.
- Historically, probation officers typically did not conduct a risk/needs assessment until after disposition, so assessment results did not inform the court's probation decision on length or conditions of supervision. Extensive social history reports were prepared prior to disposition, but recommendations primarily were based upon plea agreements.
- Probation leadership and managers are committed to the JRA and using it pre and post disposition to guide supervision contacts, case planning, and the use of services.
- The JRA will incorporate, rather than duplicate, the social history; include a standardized case plan; and ultimately, will be completed electronically.

- Three quarters of youth placed on probation receive seven or more conditions of supervision, the majority of which are standard conditions that are not tailored to youth’s risk and needs.
- Approximately 70 percent of youth are required to complete community service hours (and not required to engage in any other balanced and restorative justice activities), which is typically not related in any way to the specific harm they may have caused to victims and communities.
 - There are a substantial number of community service officers; community service placements and enforcement are left to the discretion of individual officers; and there is limited enforcement if community service hours are not completed.
- Over 50 percent of youth receive a referral to TASC without the benefit of a screening to determine whether substance use is potentially a need underlying youth’s delinquent behavior that require further evaluation.
- Judges vary in their practices regarding case review hearings to evaluate progress and compliance with supervision conditions, but cases are frequently re-calendared every three months, which requires probation officers to prepare written reports and appear in court.

DETENTION and ASSESSMENTS and DISPOSITION RECOMMENDATIONS

Detention Recommendations
<p>7. Explore strategies to streamline the offering/use of alternatives to detention (and related allocation of resources) at detention hearings such that the majority of youth are placed on a single alternative—if multiple alternatives are employed, establish policies to require collaborative case planning amongst all parties.</p> <p>8. Establish a formal policy/continuum of graduated responses for youth participating in detention alternatives.</p> <p>9. Explore opportunities to establish a required case conference between probation and detention staff for youth in detention prior to disposition, particularly for youth identified as having mental health/ substance use/trauma needs.</p>

Assessments Recommendations
<p>10. Establish a JRA implementation steering committee comprised of judges, attorneys, service providers and other stakeholders to establish a shared vision and policies/templates for how the JRA will be used pre-disposition, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Understanding of the tool, its research base and purpose, and value; b. When and how the JRA will be conducted; c. Nature/scope of recommendations provided to the court (e.g. level, length, type of supervision and services and conditions); d. Dispositional guidelines, including the use of IPS; e. Pre-dispositional report template, and with whom/how this report is shared/presented; f. Opportunities to reduce/align probation sentence lengths with youth’s risk level/offenses;

11. To the extent feasible given limited resources, develop a robust short and long-term JRA quality assurance and data collection/analysis/reporting/use plan to ensure the tool is working accurately for Cook County and that officers are completing/using it appropriately.
12. Adopt mental health/substance use/trauma screening tools for use with all youth pre-disposition, and eliminate the standard condition of referrals to TASC unless substance use screenings indicate the need for further assessment.

Disposition Recommendations
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Ensure that probation, court, and other stakeholder expectations; probation staff training, caseloads, and supervision requirements; graduated responses; and services/resources match the high-risk nature of the population being disposed to community supervision. 14. Eliminate the standard use of community service as a condition of probation; consider opportunities to use resources more efficiently to enforce community service requirements when ordered; and employ restorative justice practice requirements—such as victim mediation—that have been shown by research to improve youth outcomes and victim satisfaction with the justice system. 15. Explore opportunities to standardize and streamline the current approach to post-dispositional case progress reviews, with a particular focus on limiting the time that probation officers spend in court and maximizing the time spent providing supervision and services. 16. Explore the possibility of creating a standardized progress review report template that is based on both conditions of supervision and youth’s treatment goals/case plan.

D. Supervision and Services

The third key area of the probation system review focuses on the use of supervision and services in Cook County and sought to answer the following questions:

Supervision: What level, type, and quality of community supervision do youth receive?

Services: To what extent do youth receive services matched to their key needs and that are demonstrated as effective?

After a thorough review of the quantitative and qualitative data the following was identified (see *Appendix C* for data in the PowerPoint presentation):

Supervision Findings:

- Approximately 40% of youth ages 16 and younger placed on supervision are re-referred within one year. Approximately 55% of youth ages 16 and younger on probation are re-referred within one year. Approximately half of youth on intensive probation supervision are re-referred within 12 months and two-thirds receive technical violations.

- Prior offenses, rather than the nature of the presenting offense most closely correspond with re-referral rates in Cook County.
- Lengths of time on probation are not consistently based on risk level and are extensive for many youth.
- Approximately 90% of reoffending/technical violation events occur within the first 6-12 months that youth are placed on probation.
- Approaches to assigning probation officers new cases and conducting the initial risk assessment vary across units.
- Youth can have their risks and needs assessed in multiple, overlapping, and potentially uncoordinated ways through their probation officer, the clinical unit, the court, TASC, and service providers.
- Youth can have multiple probation officers, including officers for supervision, community service (one third to one half of all youth), electronic monitoring, evening reporting, clinical, and an education advocate.
- While judges vary in their post-dispositional case review practices, it's common to conduct quarterly in-person progress reviews, with substantial implications for officers (and youth and families) time accordingly.
- Intensive probation supervision is:
 - Not currently reserved for the highest risk youth under system supervision;
 - Often court ordered even when risk assessments would not indicate it's warranted;
 - Focused on intensive surveillance but not necessarily intensive service delivery.
- No formal agency-wide oversight processes exist targeted at youth who are at high risk for perpetuating or being victims of violence, including;
 - Flagging such cases and tracking them accordingly;
 - Ensuring these youth receive intensive supervision and services;
 - Regularly monitoring case progress/managing risk; and
 - Potentially collaborating with law enforcement and community stakeholders.

Services Findings:

- Officers generally don't rely on risk assessments to help them to identify youth's criminogenic and related service needs, and validated mental health, substance use, and trauma screenings are not routinely conducted.
- The department developed an online resource guide a number of years ago but officers generally rely on their individual or unit's knowledge of existing services to make service referral decisions and their own intuition on how best to match youth to these interventions.
- Providers are typically not trained in RNR or other best practices for working with justice-involved youth, and don't routinely receive risk assessment results or case plans.
- There are limited specific policies for officers' responsibilities for making service referrals and overseeing/coordinating treatment, with providers reporting that service use and collaboration varies widely across officers and a lack of treatment/family team meetings and joint contacts.
- No specific interventions or wrap-around service models exist specifically for the highest risk youth under system supervision at risk of out of home placement and/or violence.

- Service availability and gaps varies widely across the county:
 - The department has invested in evidence-based family therapy, cognitive behavioral approaches, and trained staff to facilitate groups to address specific criminogenic needs, but there appears to be a general dearth of such services that specifically target criminogenic needs and mental health treatment in the community.
- The Department generally relies on externally funded services with few contracted providers, and lacks sufficient partnerships with those providers to assure consistent quality oversight
 - At the same time, the Department and other city/county agencies have made limited efforts to identify service quality principles and delivery expectations for either the provider community or officers.
- Outside of the clinical unit, largely due to budget limitations, limited formal tools/processes exists to:
 - Assess service use or quality;
 - Obtain standardized reports or collect data on service use or completion; and
 - Evaluate the impact of specific services on recidivism and other youth outcomes.
- There are numerous city, county, and private funding sources for community services.
 - Providers believe it would help for the Department to more actively partner with these entities to shape funding streams specific to addressing the needs of justice-involved youth.
- Numerous funder and provider collaborations exist on services for at-risk youth, and the Department has a seat at many of these tables.
 - It is unclear that these efforts are coordinated and ensuring investments are targeted at high-risk youth/communities and promoting interventions proven effective.
 - Provider agency personnel report that their relationships are primarily at the individual rather than Department-level, which limits opportunities to ensure resources are used efficiently and to more strategically build provider service capacity to effectively justice-involved youth.
- The existence of robust, community-led service and support systems—such as the restorative justice hubs—offer the Department the opportunity to pilot innovative approaches to probation focused on partnering with communities to address youth’s risks/needs and promote their long-term positive development.

SUPERVISION and SERVICES RECOMMENDATIONS

Supervision Recommendations
<p>17. Formalize the foundational vision for Cook County’s approach to supervision; a corresponding staff model; set of concrete policies, practices, tools, and templates; and develop a detailed implementation, staff communication and training, quality assurance, and evaluation plan.</p> <p>a. Convene system stakeholders to establish a coordinated vision and plan for responding to delinquent behavior, including diverting youth that have a low-risk of reoffending; making risk-based decisions on who requires supervision and what level/length; and</p>

identifying more formal ways of ensuring youth who don't require juvenile justice system supervision still receive needed services.

- b. Convene Department staff to discuss and share this vision and promote staff-buy-in.
 - c. Prioritize JRA implementation and expand/strengthen staff and stakeholder education and training, reporting and recommendation protocols, and quality assurance capacity.
 - d. Establish a detailed policy on the development of case plans, including involvement of youth/families.
 - e. Standardize case assignment, assessment, supervision, and other key practices across all units.
 - f. Establish a detailed policy, and potentially associated curricula, to guide the substance of case contacts.
 - g. Develop a more formalized system of incentives and graduated responses.
 - h. Require regular family contacts, and develop/pilot a youth/family treatment team meeting model.
 - i. Require annual training for all staff—and provide it for other system stakeholders—on adolescent development, RNR, evidence-based practices, and youth/family engagement/motivational techniques.
18. Examine the existing supervision staffing model and identify opportunities to redeploy staff to high priority areas (e.g. supervision of high-risk cases, quality assurance, etc.), and/or to improve coordination and the efficient use of time amongst all staff assigned to the same case.
19. Procure resources to develop a robust quality assurance and research unit that can evaluate implementation progress, direct needed improvements, and assist the department to collect, analyze, share, and use data to improve supervision (and service) practices and outcomes.
20. Track recidivism on at least an annual basis, including into the criminal justice system, and analyze and report the data by risk level and other key demographics/variables.
21. Partner with judges to:
- a. Minimize lengths of supervision and base lengths/intensity on risk/treatment goals;
 - b. Standardize the method for including supervision/service recommendations in pre-dispositional reports;
 - c. Develop a standardized case progress report template;
 - d. Minimize/standardized the frequency of in-person review hearings.
22. Establish criteria for flagging a case as high risk for violence; prioritize these cases for intensive supervision and services; and adopt a specialized case conferencing/oversight process.

Services Recommendations

23. Establish specific policies that outline probation officers' roles and responsibilities for making appropriate service referrals, ensuring youth engage with these services and make sufficient progress, and for coordination with service providers. Consider piloting a family/team case planning/conference model.

24. Establish a service resource guide or registry and associated matrices for staff working in different communities that outlines specific risk and need eligibility criteria for key external services (CBT, substance use, family therapy, etc.), and referral policies and points of contact for each intervention.
25. Standardize the sharing of risk assessment summary results and case plans with providers when making referrals, and provide an annual training for providers on RNR and evidence-based practices for justice-involved youth.
26. Establish an intensive wrap-around service model, in conjunction with intensive supervision and in partnership with designated providers, for all youth identified as at high risk for perpetuating or being victims of violence.
27. Take a more active role in shaping the availability, funding for, and quality of services for youth in the juvenile justice system.
 - a. Establish research-based criteria to guide the Department's use of contracted, fee-for-service, and external services.
 - b. Convene and partner with city, county, and private funders (as well as with other city/county public agencies) to share this criteria, service needs/gaps, and to design funding streams that specifically target addressing the criminogenic needs of justice-involved youth, including those at risk of perpetuating or being victims of violence.
 - c. Explore the possibility of developing an advisory group of community-based providers focused on better meeting the needs of justice-involved youth and/or establishing a working group within existing provider collaborations.
 - d. Use these groups to: develop collaborative service initiatives; promote the use of research-based services; pilot the use of a validated service quality assessment; pilot a community-based, positive youth development probation model; and standardize data collection, reporting, and evaluation protocols.
 - e. Shift staffing resources and/or obtain new resources to employ resource coordinators that can oversee activities with providers and help hold officers accountable for adhering to service policies as well as to bolster service quality assurance and evaluation capacity.
 - f. Cultivate service programs/supports specifically for older youth.

IV. NEXT STEPS and IMPLEMENTATION

The CSG/RFK Consultant Team respectfully submits these findings and recommendations to Cook County Juvenile Probation for their consideration. It must be noted that during the course of the review, Probation and a number of key stakeholders has begun to address some of the issues and recommendations presented in this report. Cook County Juvenile Probation Management and numerous staff are to be commended for this progress and commitment.

The RFK NRC and CSG are committed to using the principles and research of implementation science and change management in establishing the infrastructure, methods, and activities for this proposal and

partnership. This provides the best opportunity to effectively implement the recommendations for systemic change and for long-term sustainability of the revised policies, procedures, and practices.

Implementing the Cook County Juvenile Probation collaborative and ongoing plan for the transformation of the youth justice system that includes the primary goals of reducing recidivism and improving youth behavior is challenging for even the most sophisticated probation and juvenile justice system. Effective implementation requires an intensive system-wide realignment to address deficiencies in practice and gaps in programs and services to improve outcomes for youth involved in the juvenile justice system. It is widely realized that organizations attempting to implement innovations without sufficient readiness and exploration efforts, or scaling up contextually relevant implementation supports, are likely to create long adoption curves for the change process – and when done poorly can lead to partial or poor implementation and even abandonment of the innovations. The RFK NRC and CSG encourage Cook County Juvenile Probation’s commitment to the principles of Implementation Science (IS) as consideration for these twenty-seven recommendations is undertaken. The Consultant Team therefore asks that the following necessary actions are taken related to the recommendations:

- Endorsement
- Prioritization
- Sequencing
- Accountability/responsibility
- Timelines

The Consultant Team looks forward to presenting the findings and recommendations in this report on June 20-21, 2019 to the opportunity to support Cook County Juvenile Probation in developing an action plan that incorporates the endorsed recommendations.

VI. SUMMARY AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Council of State Governments Justice Center and the Robert F. Kennedy National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice would like to thank the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention for their visionary leadership that provided funding for two sites to receive a comprehensive Probation System Review. OJJDP recognized that true change happens from within and as a result of tailored technical assistance that prioritizes building strong partnerships and collaborations with the jurisdictions. As a result of this funding, and through a competitive application process, Cook County Juvenile Probation was chosen as one of these two sites.

The CSG Justice Center and RFK Consultant Team wishes to acknowledge the staff and leadership of the Cook County Juvenile Probation Department, including Director Avik Das, who demonstrated commitment, courage and transparency leading up to and throughout the course of the probation system review. We would like to offer a special thanks to Section Chief PO Donna Neal and Section Chief PO Mark Werner, who tirelessly organized logistics, established agendas for on-site meetings,

coordinated frequent conference calls with necessary personnel, and ensured our consistent access to probation staff and critical stakeholders. We also offer a special thanks to the Honorable Michael Toomin, Presiding Judge of Juvenile Justice and all of the members of judiciary as they offered regular opportunities to attend Judges Meetings and share our observations, findings and identified challenges and obstacles. We want to thank the Honorable Timothy Evans, Chief Judge Circuit Court of Cook County, for availing his time and interest to meet with the Consultant Team. Additionally, we offer a special note of gratitude to Maryam Ahmad and Barbara Dawkins, Cook County State's Attorney's Office, for their availability and commitment as the Consultant Team explored enhanced case referral processing and diversion methods.

There are many other persons who deserve recognition for their contributions to the probation system review, among them Section Chief PO Ore Jones, Section Chief PO Jennifer Nunez, Deputy Chief PO Melissa Spooner (Parise), but this individual identification will surely fall short of all of those invested staff and stakeholders who partnered with RFK NRC and CSG in this significant undertaking. We would simply like to conclude with a special thanks to all of the staff who offered their time, perspectives, experiences, knowledge and opinions in a transparent and candid manner throughout our interview, discussion and survey methods for the review.

Appendix A



Justice Center THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS



National nonprofit, nonpartisan membership association of state government officials

Represents all three branches of state government

Provides practical advice informed by the best available evidence

2

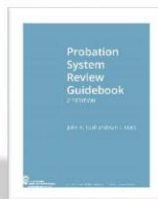


Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps RFK National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice



"Here in America today, perhaps the clearest mirror of our performance, the truest measure of whether we live up to our ideals, is our youth."

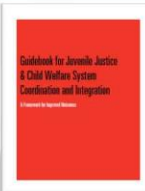
Probation System Reform



Information Sharing

Information Sharing Toolkit
www.infosharetoolkit.org

Dual Status Youth



3



- 01 Assessment Process
- 02 Key Findings and Best Practices
- 03 Next Steps

The Probation Systems Review is designed to help Cook County improve outcomes for youth in the juvenile justice system.

9-12 month technical assistance process to align community supervision policies, practices, and funding with what research shows works to reduce recidivism and improve outcomes for youth

Partnership with and Input from Key System Stakeholders + **Data-driven and Research-Based Analysis** + **Collaborative Consensus Building**

The first key areas of the probation systems review focus on referrals, filings, and the use of diversion.

Key Areas of Review and Assessment Questions



Referrals/Filings/Diversion: Who are the youth being referred to the juvenile justice system, and is consistent, objective, research-based criteria used to make diversion and filing decisions?

Over five years of case-level data from Cook County's data system informs the analysis presented today.

Data Reviewed	Source
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Client demographics• Referrals to juvenile court• Petitions• Charges• Interventions• Court orders• Custodial status• Custodial petitions• Conditions of court orders• Detention screening• YASI risk levels	JEMS (Juvenile Probation computer system)

There are some key caveats to note about the data analysis.

- Arrest information was not available.
- Charge information was only available for filed referrals, so there is no analysis of the types of offenses driving diversion and filing decisions.
- YASI risk assessment data was not available from the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC).

Extensive focus groups and interviews with system stakeholders also inform the analysis presented today.

- Probation leadership
- Probation data/quality assurance staff
- Probation supervisors
- Law enforcement
- Probation officers
- Prosecutors
- Probation diversion and intake staff
- Defense attorneys
- Diversion service providers and community partners
- Judges
- Probation clinical staff

Low-risk youth should receive minimal if any system supervision and services while system resources should focus on higher risk youth.

STEP 1: Assess risk of and needs using validated screening tools

Low risk

Moderate risk

High risk

STEP 2: Minimize supervision for low-risk youth and focus resources on high-risk youth

Diversion from system supervision

Probation

Probation
OR
residential placement

STEP 3: Assess needs and match youth to services

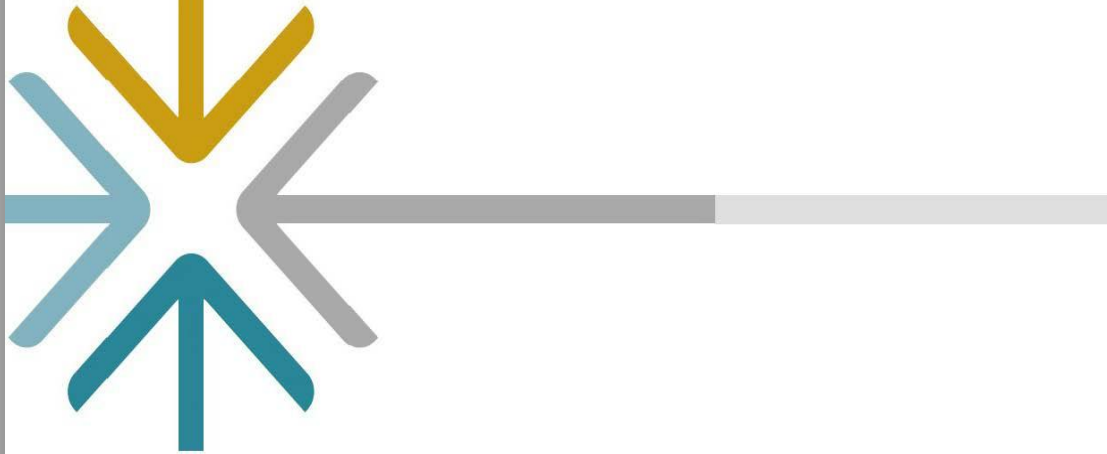
Referrals to behavioral health or other service systems if needed

Identify and address risk factors that drive delinquent behavior

Key building blocks are in place to align Cook County front end juvenile justice policies/practices with what research shows works to improve youth outcomes.

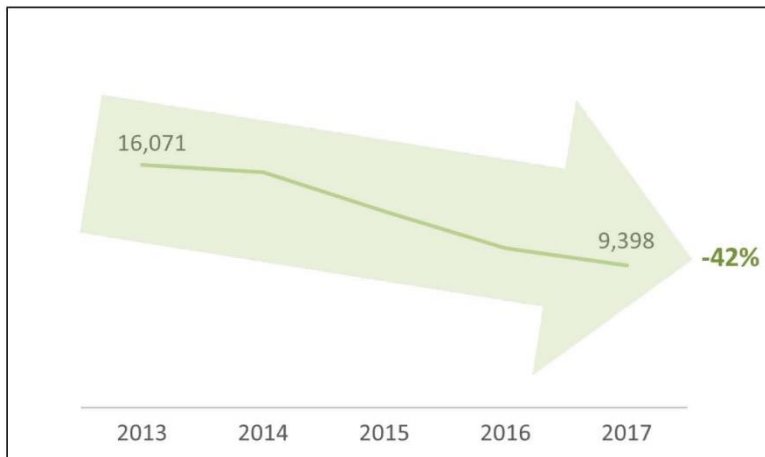
- Probation leadership are knowledgeable about research/best practice and have established a vision and strategic plan for a more research-based approach (Probation 2.0).
- Probation officers are passionate about and committed to partnering with youth and families to improve their lives.
- Probation leadership, judges, law enforcement, and attorneys generally agree that youth that are low risk to reoffend should receive minimal supervision, and instead, system resources should focus on youth that are a public safety risk.
- Arrests, referrals, filings, the use of detention, and dispositions to community supervision and state custody have declined substantially over the past five years.
- Law enforcement is making a substantial effort to establish a developmentally appropriate approach (JISC); divert youth from formal system involvement (station adjustment); and connect youth and their families to needed services.
- With the adoption of the Juvenile Risk Assessment (JRA) and its intended use pre- and post-disposition, Cook County is well positioned to ensure dispositional, supervision, and service decisions are based on a validated assessment of youth's risks and needs.

- 01 Assessment Process
- 02 **Key Findings and Best Practices**
--Referrals, Filings, and Diversion
- 03 Next Steps



Like most jurisdictions nationwide, Cook County has experienced a significant decline in referrals.

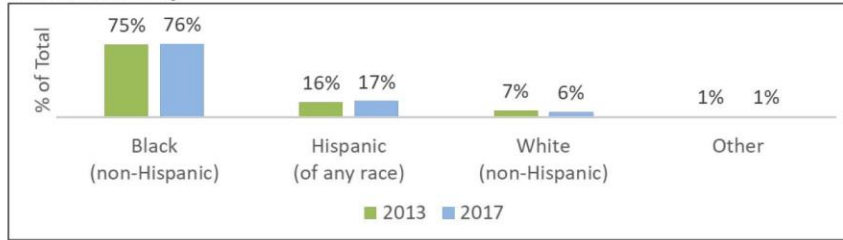
Referrals, 2013–2017



The demographic composition of referrals has remain relatively unchanged over the last five years except for an increase in older youth.

Referrals, 2013 and 2017

Race/Ethnicity



Sex



Municipality

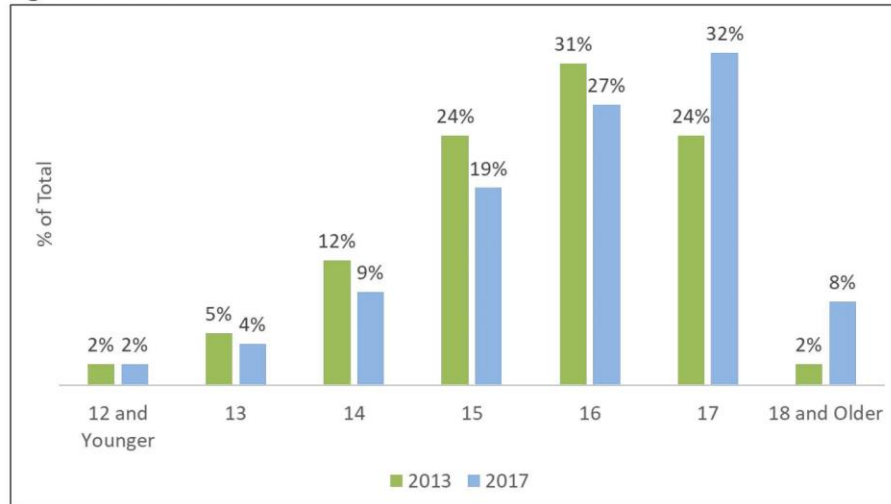


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The demographic composition of referrals has remain relatively unchanged over the last five years except for an increase in older youth (cont.).

Referrals, 2013 and 2017

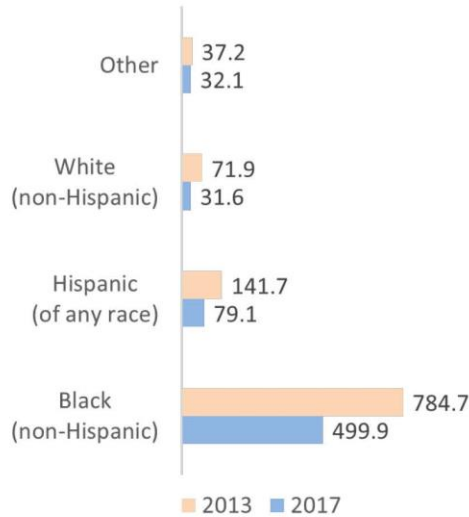
Age at Referral



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Youth of color are more likely to be referred than their white peers, and this disparity has increased over time.

Juvenile Court Referral Rate by Race/Ethnicity*



*Per 10,000 youth ages 10–17 in Cook County.

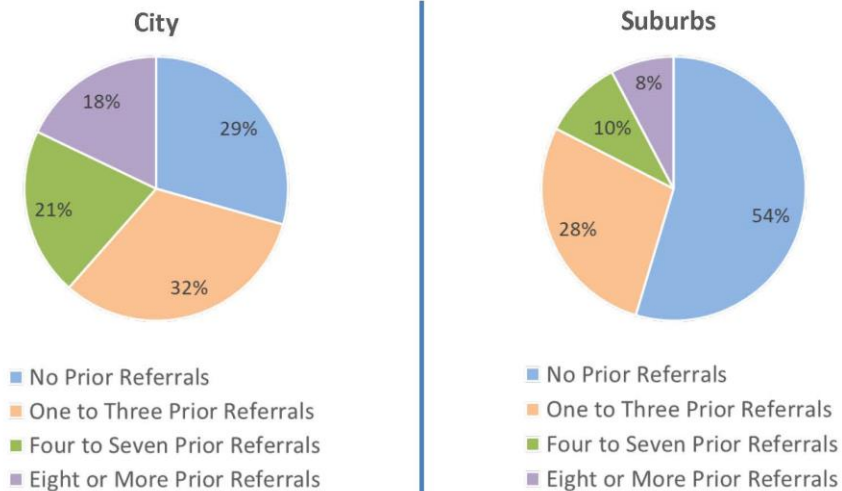
Juvenile Court Referral Relative Rate

Race/Ethnicity	2013	2017
White (non-Hispanic)	1.0	1.0
Hispanic (of any race)	2.0	2.5
Black (non-Hispanic)	10.9	15.3

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City referrals are primarily comprised of youth with prior referrals while the majority of youth referred from the suburbs have no priors.

Referrals by Prior History, 2017

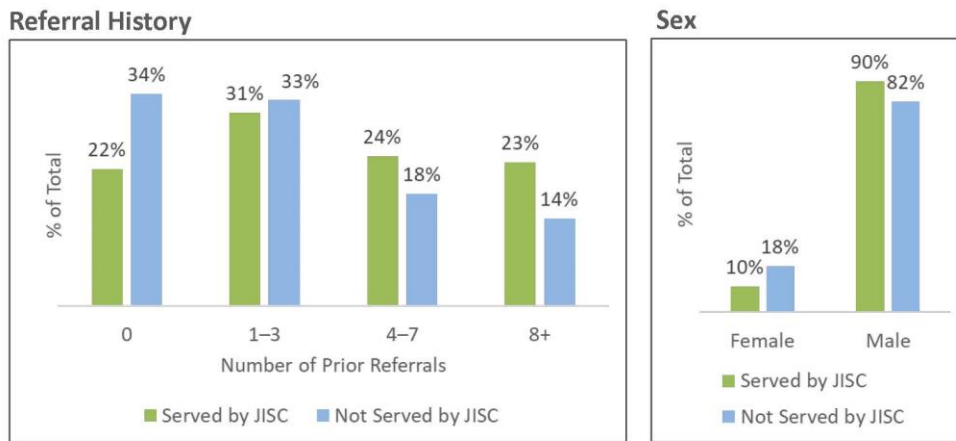


*The high proportion of suburban referrals comprised of youth with no prior referrals could signify the need to increase the diversion of first-time offenders and/or success keeping youth from being rereferred.

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Youth with no prior offenses and females are less likely to be referred from areas in which the Juvenile Intervention and Support Center (JISC) operates.

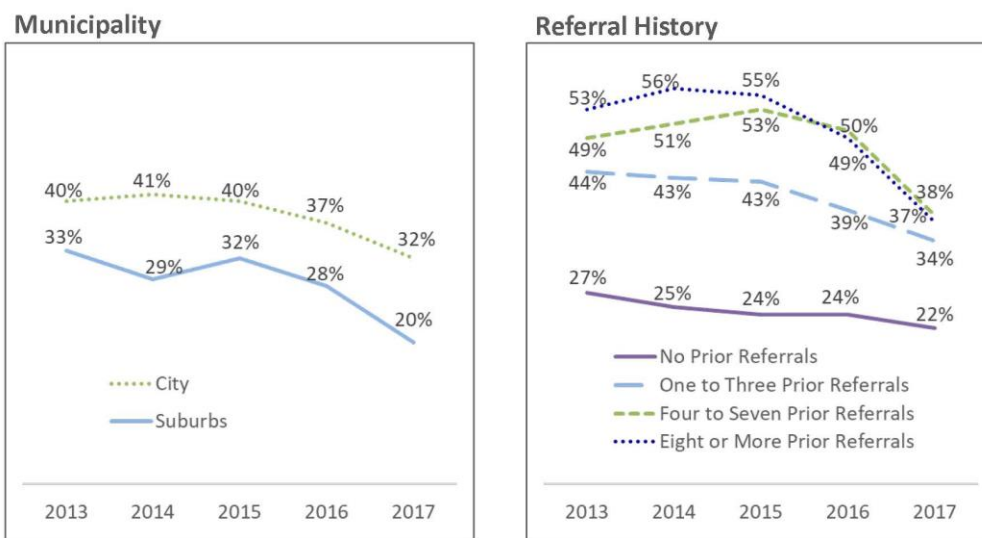
Chicago Referrals by Location of Arrest, 2017



Note: The JISC serves youth arrested in Chicago Police Districts 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12.

Filing rates in the city and suburbs have declined over the past five years, particularly in 2017 and for youth with multiple prior referrals.

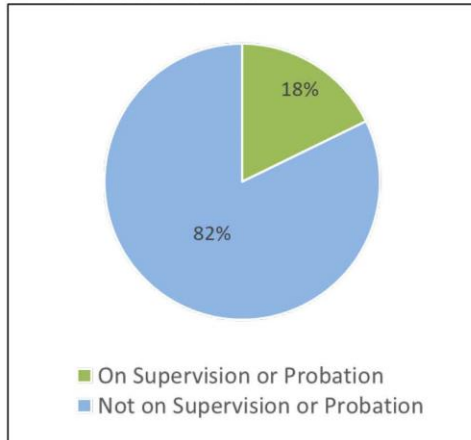
Filing Rates, 2013-2017



Approximately one third of youth with 4-7 prior referrals and half of youth with 8 or more priors whose referrals are not filed are currently on supervision or probation.

Supervision or Probation Status at the Time of Referral, 2017

All Referrals Not Filed



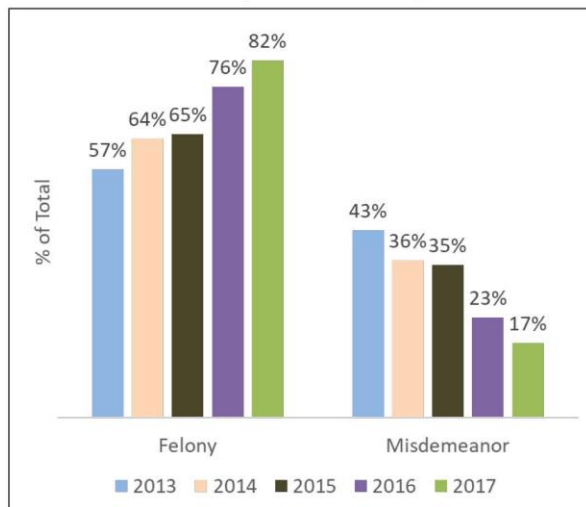
Referrals Not Filed by Referral History



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Filed cases are increasingly comprised of youth who commit felony offenses, with substantial increases in the proportion and raw number of certain violent crimes.

Filed Referrals by Offense Level, 2013-2017



Note: A small number of cases in categories other than felony and misdemeanor are not included here.

Change in Filed Referrals for Select Violent and Weapons Charges*

Most Serious Charge	2013	2017	% Change
Agg. Vehicular Hijacking	10 (<1%)	48 (2%)	380%
Armed Robbery	76 (1%)	282 (10%)	271%
Murder	2 (<1%)	52 (2%)	2500%
Unlawful Possession of a Firearm – Handguns	245 (4%)	500 (17%)	104%
Unlawful Use of Weapon	41 (1%)	71 (2%)	73%

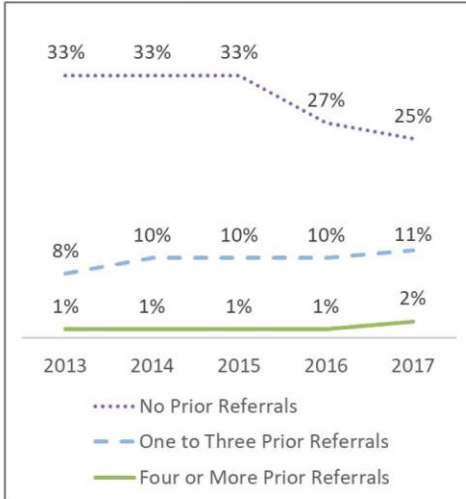
*Most serious charge per referral.

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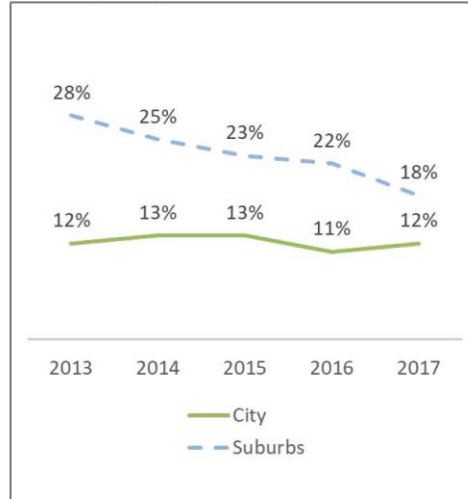
As filing rates have declined, diversion has been used infrequently other than for first-time offenders, and its use has declined in the suburbs.

Diversion Rates, 2013–2017

Referral History



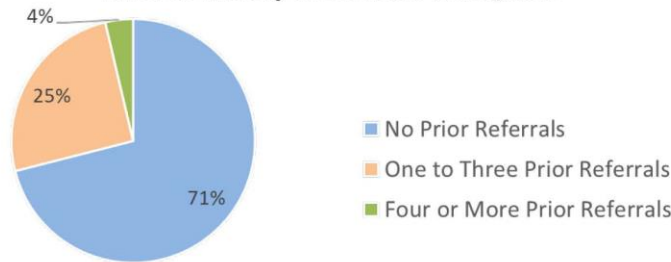
Municipality



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Diversion is primarily used for first-time offenders and is limited in scope.

Referral History of Diverted Youth, 2017



- Diversion staff conduct a risk screening after the diversion decision is made, and typically make informal referrals to service providers based on their knowledge and experience of available and appropriate services.
- Diversion is typically 90 days; oversight is limited to phone contacts; and staff have limited capacity to engage youth/families and provide case management services.
- The use of restorative justice practices, other than community service, is limited.
- Probation, the state’s attorney’s office, or other parties are not routinely collecting data on or analyzing diversion use, participation, or outcomes.

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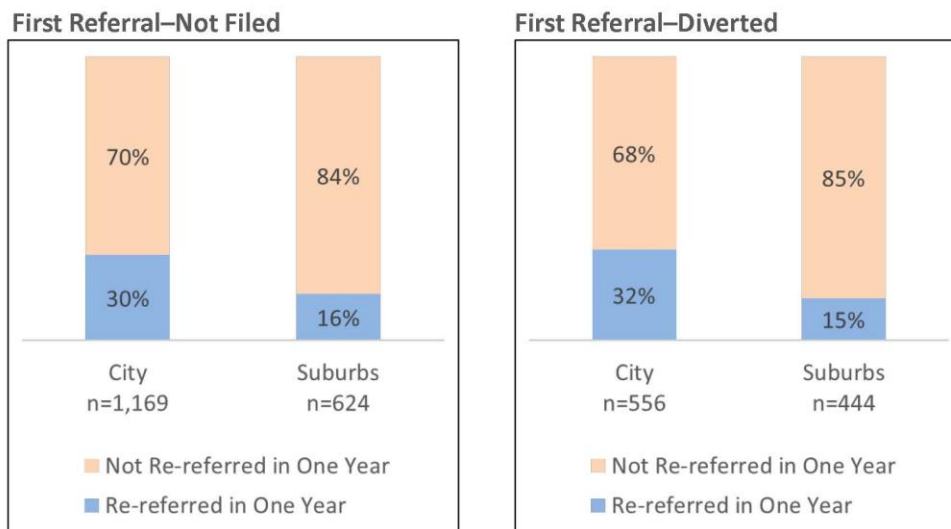
Limited resources, policies and procedures, collaboration, and a lack of structured decision making inhibit the front end of the juvenile justice system from most effectively protecting public safety.

- Law enforcement is making notable efforts to divert youth from formal system involvement, but is not using a validated risk screening tool to make diversion decisions and has limited resources to connect youth to needed services and provide case management.
- Resource limitations hinder the state attorney’s office’s ability to focus on cases beyond youth who commit violent offenses, and a lack of consistent, objective criteria and risk screening tools are used to guide diversion decisions.
- Validated needs screening tools—such as mental health, substance use, and trauma screeners—are not currently used to guide diversion or service decisions.
- All parties express concerns about the limitations of the front end of the juvenile justice system, but there is a lack of trust and formal, sustained collaboration across agencies to establish a shared vision, integrated set of policies and practices, and to determine how existing and potentially new resources and expertise across justice agencies (and external funders) could be used more effectively.

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Approximately 30 percent of youth with no prior referrals from the city and 16 percent from the suburbs who cases are not filed are re-referred within one year; diverted youth are re-referred at a similar rate.

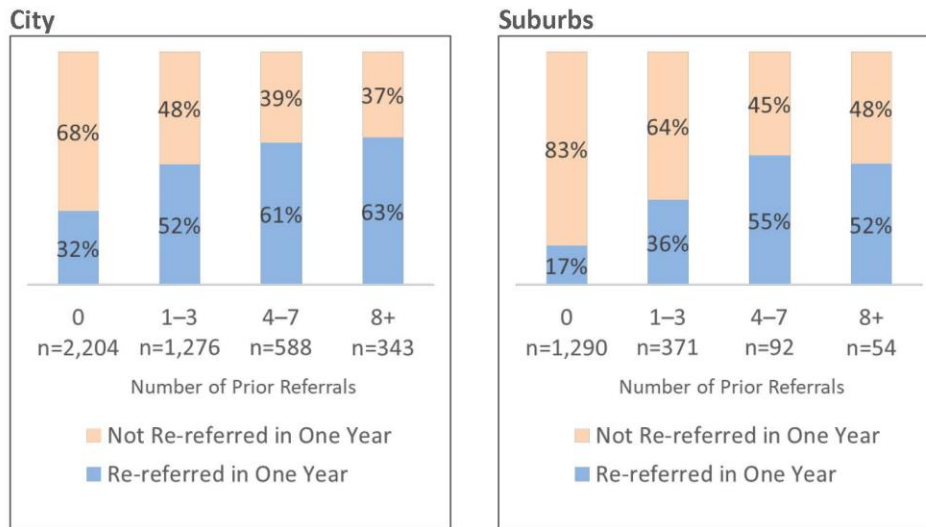
Re-referral within One Year by Municipality, 2016



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Youth with multiple prior referrals are much more likely to come back into contact with the juvenile justice system, particularly in the city.

Re-referral within One Year by Referral History, 2016

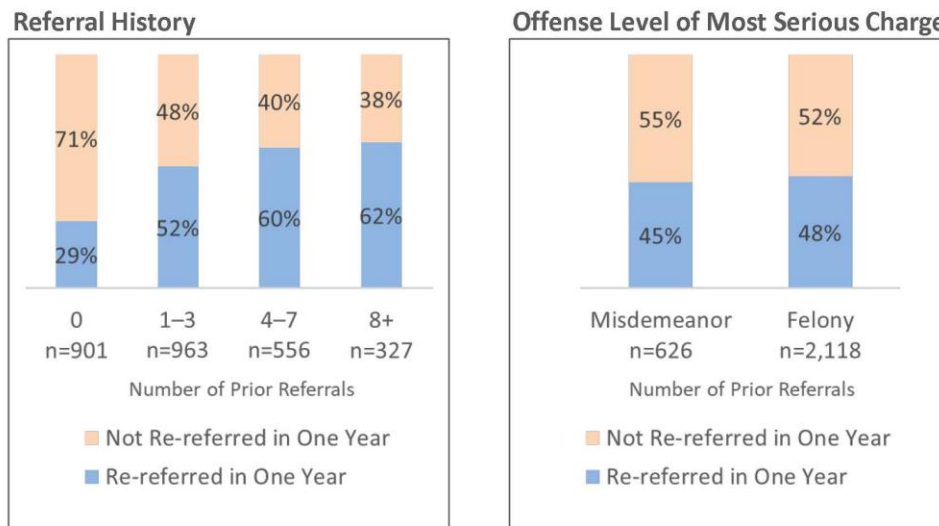


Note: For youth with multiple referrals, re-referral was measured from the first referral occurring in the time period.

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Consistent with research and findings from other jurisdictions, referral history rather than the nature of youth's offense, is a much stronger predictor of rereferral rates.

Re-referral within One Year of Filed Referral by Referral History, 2016



Note: For youth with multiple referrals, re-referral was measured from the first referral occurring in the time period.

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Referrals, Filings, and Diversion: Key Takeaways


1. An increase in violent crimes being referred to juvenile court and resource limitations have resulted in declining filing rates, particularly for youth who have multiple prior referrals; yet, these are the youth most likely to come back into contact with the juvenile justice system.
2. Diversion/supervision decisions are not based on consistent, objective criteria and/or the use of risk screening tools to identify the youth that represent the greatest risk to public safety and ensure they receive the appropriate level and type of supervision.
3. Notable efforts are being made to connect youth whose cases are not filed to services, but these efforts are limited in scope, not guided by the use of needs screening tools, not coordinated across county agencies and service providers, and thus, may have limited effectiveness.

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Referrals, Filings, and Diversion: Potential Opportunities for Improvement

1. Establish a shared vision and operational plan across agencies for how the front end of the juvenile justice system should function to effectively protect public safety, and what resources are required to accomplish this goal, and share this proposal with city, county, and private stakeholders/funders.
2. Centralize the intake function for all youth referred to the juvenile justice system in partnership with law enforcement, state's attorneys office, and probation—including conducting risk and needs screening; making diversion recommendations; and overseeing diversion services—and consider opportunities for efficiencies given the current station adjustment process (i.e. consider a centralized, streamlined assessment center model).
3. Adopt risk screening tools to objectively identify youth's risk of reoffending and to guide diversion and supervision decisions accordingly.
4. Adopt mental health, substance use, and/or trauma screening tools to guide diversion decisions, and to match youth with the most appropriate services (in or outside of the juvenile justice system).
5. Establish a more robust continuum of diversion supervision, services, and restorative justice practices, and strengthen diversion program oversight and quality assurance.
6. Establish key diversion performance measures, regularly collect and analyze data on these measures, and produce at least an annual report for all stakeholders on diversion participation and outcomes.

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- 
- 01 Assessment Process
 - 02 Key Findings and Best Practices
--Referrals, Diversion, and Filings
 - 03 **Next Steps**

The Work Ahead

January/February

- Task force Meeting #3: Assessments and Dispositions

March/April

- Task force Meeting #4: Supervision and Services

Appendix B



Justice Center

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS



National nonprofit, nonpartisan membership association of state government officials

Represents all three branches of state government

Provides practical advice informed by the best available evidence

2



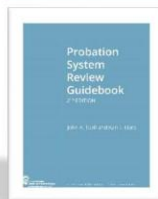
Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps

RFK National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice



"Here in America today, perhaps the clearest mirror of our performance, the truest measure of whether we live up to our ideals, is our youth."

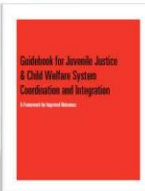
Probation System Reform



Information Sharing

Information Sharing Toolkit
www.infosharetoolkit.org

Dual Status Youth



3



- 01 Assessment Process
- 02 Key Findings and Best Practices
- 03 Next Steps

The Probation Systems Review is designed to help Cook County improve outcomes for youth in the juvenile justice system.

9-12 month technical assistance process to align community supervision policies, practices, and funding with what research shows works to reduce recidivism and improve outcomes for youth

Partnership with and Input from Key System Stakeholders + **Data-driven and Research-Based Analysis** + **Collaborative Consensus Building**

The second key area of the probation systems review focuses on the use of detention, assessments, and dispositional decisions.

Key Areas of Review and Assessment Questions



Detention: Is consistent, objective, research-based criteria used to make detention decisions, and are alternatives to detention used efficiently to meet public safety and youth's needs?



Assessments/Dispositions: Who is being disposed by the juvenile justice system, to what level of supervision, and is consistent, objective, research-based criteria used to guide dispositional decisions?

Over five years of case-level data from Cook County's data system informs the analysis presented today.

Data Reviewed	Source
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Client demographics• Referrals to juvenile court• Petitions• Charges• Interventions• Court orders• Custodial status• Custodial petitions• Conditions of court orders• Detention screening• YASI risk levels	JEMS (Juvenile Probation computer system)

There are some key caveats to note about the data analysis.

- Because we did not collect data from the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center, we used only detention screening information for the analysis of detention and thus have limited information about who is actually detained.
- YASI risk assessment data was not available from the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC).
- Interventions recorded in JEMS are primarily court-ordered interventions. Though some non-court ordered programs and services are tracked, there is not a comprehensive record of them in JEMS.

Extensive focus groups and interviews with system stakeholders also inform the analysis presented today.

- Probation leadership
- Probation data/quality assurance staff
- Probation supervisors
- Law enforcement
- Probation officers
- Prosecutors
- Probation diversion and intake staff
- Defense attorneys
- Detention and alternative to detention staff
- Judges
- Probation clinical staff

The results of validated risk and needs assessments should inform the level, length, and type of supervision and services that youth receive.

STEP 1: Assess risk of and needs using validated screening tools

Low risk

Moderate risk

High risk

STEP 2: Minimize supervision for low-risk youth and focus resources on high-risk youth

Diversion from system supervision

Probation

Probation
OR
residential placement

STEP 3: Assess needs and match youth to services

Referrals to behavioral health or other service systems if needed

Identify and address risk factors that drive delinquent behavior

01 Assessment Process

02 Key Findings and Best Practices

--Detention and Alternatives

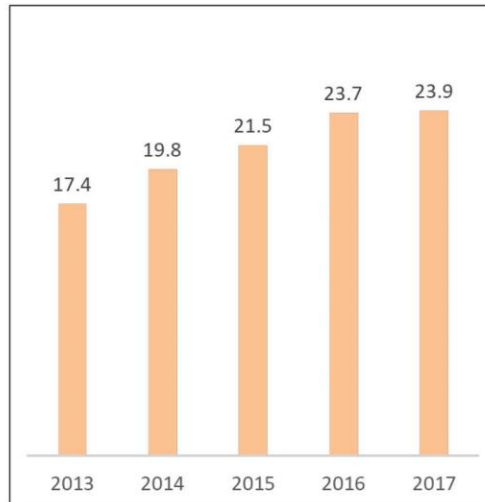
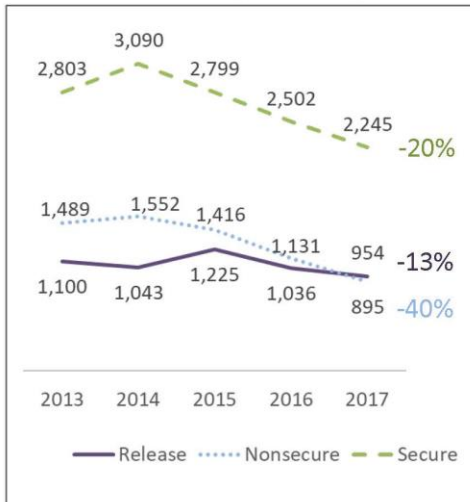
--Assessments and Dispositions

03 Next Steps



The use of detention has declined, particularly non-secure detention; the rate of secure detention per referrals has increased.

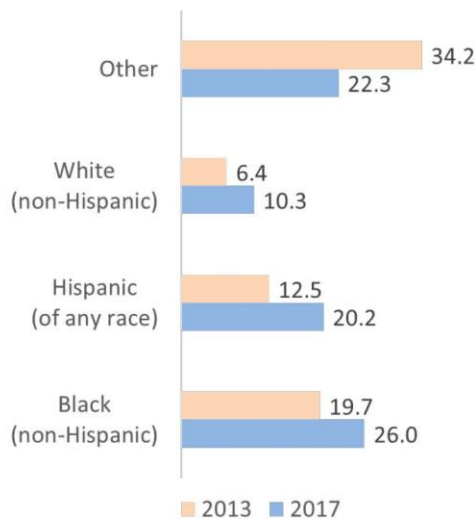
1A Detention Screening Decision, 2013–2017 1B Secure Detention Decision Rate*, 2013–2017



*Per 100 Cook County Juvenile Court referrals.

Racial disparities in the use of detention have remained steady for Hispanic youth and declined for Black youth.

1C. Secure Detention Decision Rate*



*Per 100 Cook County Juvenile Court referrals.

1D. Secure Detention Decision Relative Rate

Race/Ethnicity	2013	2017
White (non-Hispanic)	1.0	1.0
Hispanic (of any race)	1.9	2.0
Black (non-Hispanic)	3.1	2.5

Initial detention decisions are made in a consistent, objective, research-based way.

- Initial detention decisions are based on the use of a validated detention screening tool.
- Only approximately five percent of detention decisions are the result of overrides, and overrides are relatively equal to higher/lower levels of security (e.g. secure to non-secure, non-secure to secure, etc.).
- Detention screening staff receive regular training in the use of the detention screening tool, and quality assurance protocols are in place to ensure that the tool is completed accurately and used appropriately.

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It's unclear that the current approach to administrating alternatives to detention is the most efficient use of limited resources.



- Training and education for judges on the use of these alternatives is limited.
- Individual officers may communicate about youth's progress and review each other's case notes but there isn't a formal, coordinated approach to case monitoring and planning.

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It's unclear that the current approach to administering alternatives to detention is the most efficient use of limited resources (cont.).

- There are approximately 20 electronic monitoring officers; an additional cohort of overnight officers; six evening reporting center officers stationed at the centers; and a cohort of expeditors.
- In recent years, the Saura Center and Evening Reporting Centers have been consistently serving less youth than their contracted capacity.
- Alternative to detention (ATD) officers are limited in their capacity to conduct home visits and provide supervision/services.
- ATD officers lack a formal system of incentives and graduated responses, and are unable to file violations directly with the court—it's unclear to what extent the state's attorney office files formal violations when ATD staff notify them of youth's noncompliance.

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Youth in detention have their mental health needs assessed and addressed but this information is not generally shared with the court/probation.

- Youth are receiving a fairly robust assessment of their substance use and mental health needs and services while in detention.
- Probation and detention have recently made progress on improving information sharing on youth's mental health status, but this information exchange is still limited, and does not include other potentially key information on youth's risks and needs. As a result, the court and probation staff lack potentially important information to inform dispositional decisions, case planning, and service delivery.

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Detention: Key Takeaways

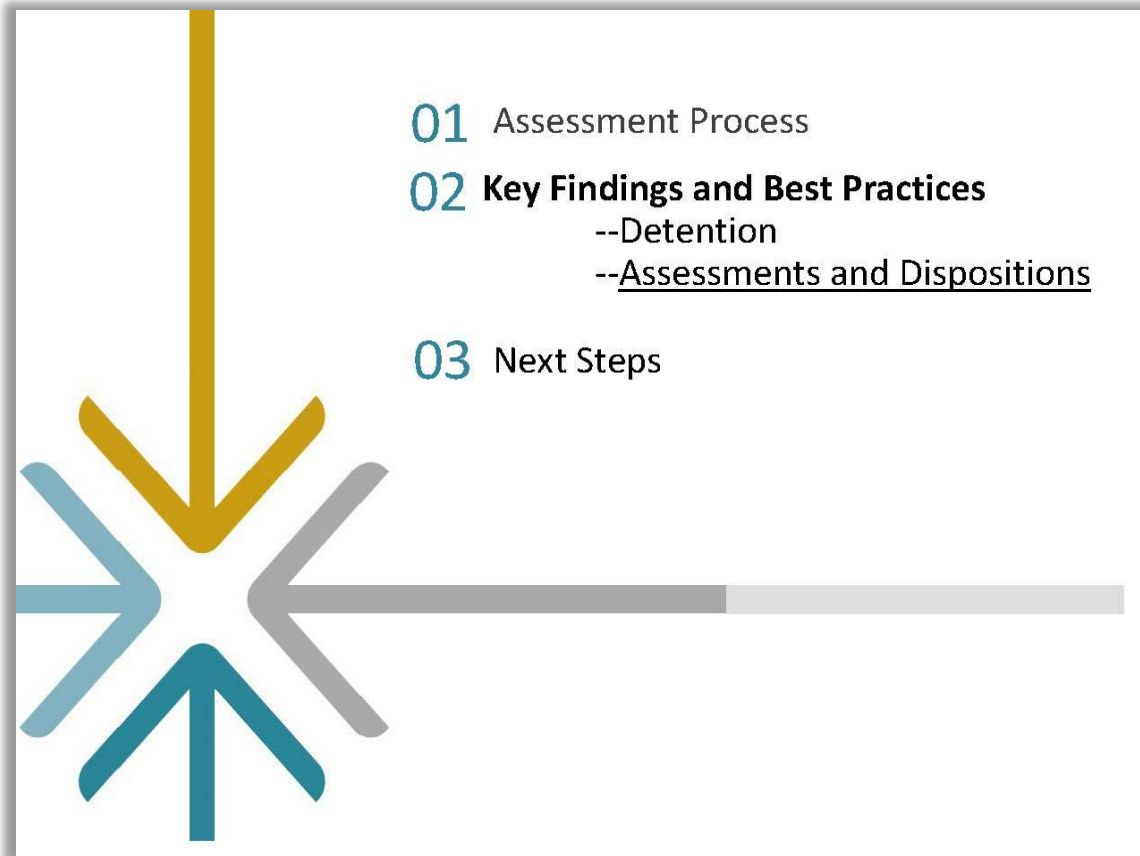
1. The use of detention has declined significantly over the past five years, and initial detention decisions are made through the use of a validated detention screening tool.
2. The current approach to the use of alternatives to detention may not be the most efficient use of limited resources.
3. Recent efforts have increased information sharing between probation and detention staff but more collaboration is needed to coordinate the assessment and treatment of youth's mental health, substance use, trauma, and other key needs.

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Detention: Potential Opportunities for Improvement

1. Explore strategies to streamline the offering/use of alternatives to detention (and related allocation of resources) at detention hearings such that the majority of youth are placed on a single alternative—if multiple alternatives are employed, establish policies to require collaborative case planning amongst all parties.
2. Establish a formal policy/continuum of graduated responses for youth participating in detention alternatives.
3. Explore opportunities to establish a required case conference between probation and detention staff for youth in detention prior to disposition, particularly for youth identified as having mental health/ substance use/trauma needs.

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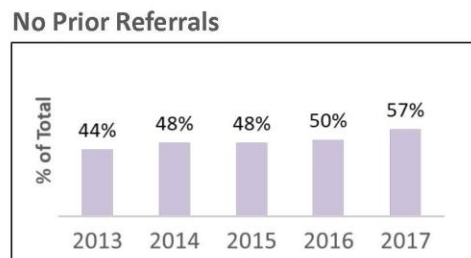
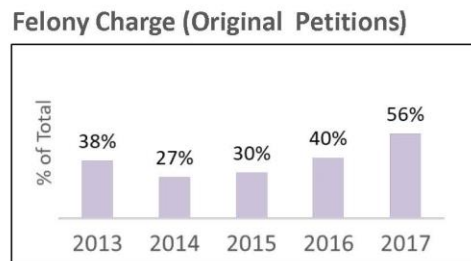


A small and declining number of youth are placed on supervision, increasingly youth who commit first-time, felony offenses.

1E. Placed on Supervision, 2013–2017



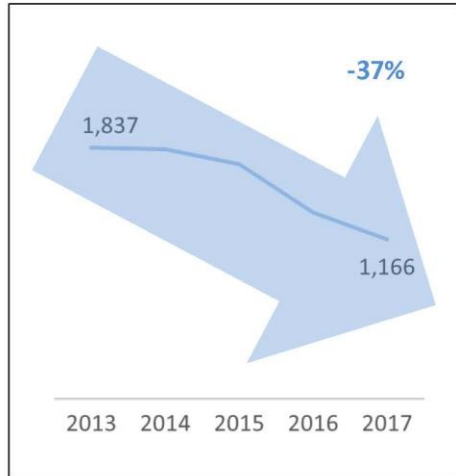
Note: If there was more than one supervision court order per day only the order with the most serious charge was counted.



The number of youth placed on probation has declined almost 40 percent; the majority, and an increasing proportion, have committed felony offenses and have multiple priors.

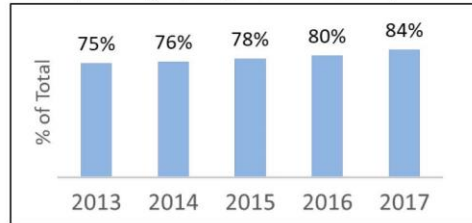
1F. Placed on Probation, 2013–2017

Total

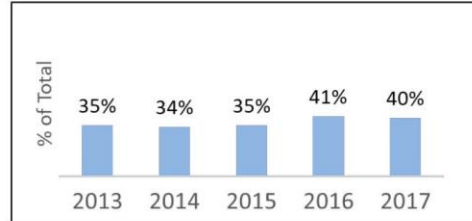


Note: If there was more than one probation court order per day only the order with the most serious charge was counted.

Felony Charge (Original Petitions)



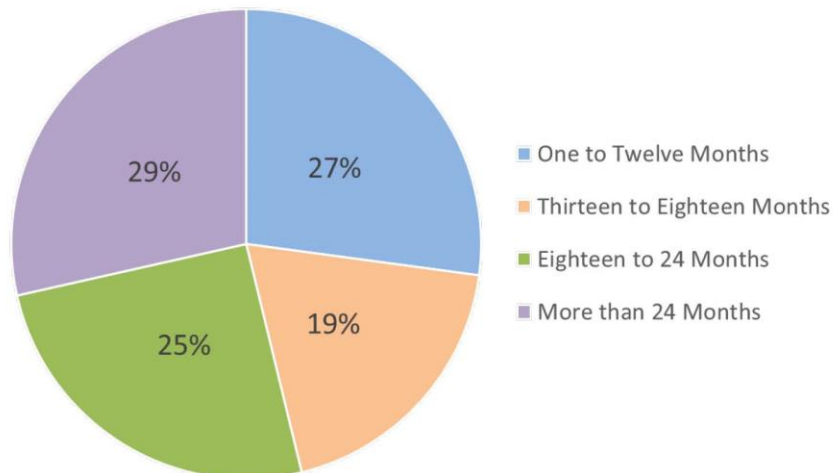
Three or More Referrals



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The majority of youth receive probation sentences greater than 12 months and approximately a third receive more than 24 months.

1G. Probation Sentence Length (Original Petitions), 2017

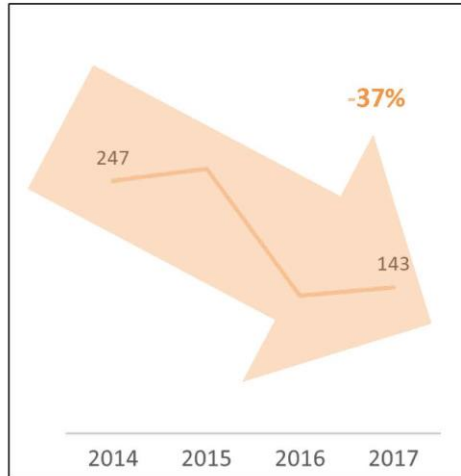


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The number of youth committed to state custody has declined by over 40 percent over the past five years, and committed youth have committed multiple priors and felony offenses.

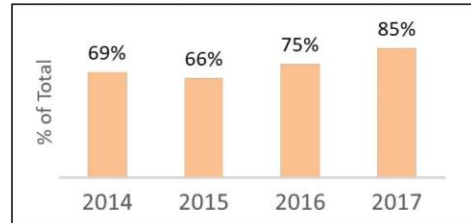
1H. Committed to State Custody, 2014–2017

Total

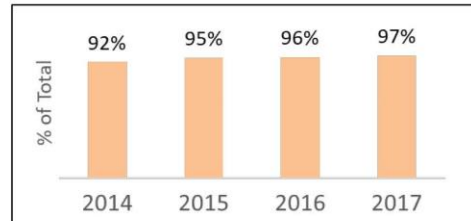


Note: If there was more than one custodial petition per day only that with the most serious charge was counted.

Felony Charge (Original Petitions)



Three or More Referrals



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Historically, risk/needs assessments have not been used to guide dispositional decisions.

- Historically, probation officers typically did not conduct a risk/needs assessment until after disposition, and pre-dispositional reports and recommendations were not shared with the court to inform supervision and service decisions.
- Mental health, substance use, and trauma screenings are not currently conducted prior to disposition unless a mental health evaluation is requested by the court (approximately less than five percent of all cases).
- Risk assessment information is not generally used to determine eligibility for intensive probation supervision (IPS); the court often orders youth directly into IPS without such an assessment; and the use of IPS has not increased despite the more challenging profile of youth being placed on probation.

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Conditions of supervision are not tailored to addressing the underlying needs driving youth's delinquent behavior or the specific harm caused to victims and communities.

- Three quarters of youth placed on probation receive seven or more conditions of supervision, the majority of which are standard conditions that are not tailored to youth's risk and needs.
- Approximately 70 percent of youth are required to complete community service hours (and not required to engage in any other balanced and restorative justice activities), which is typically not related in any way to the specific harm they may have caused to victims and communities.
 - There are a substantial number of community service officers; community service placements and enforcement is left to the discretion of individual officers; and there is limited enforcement if community service hours are not completed.
- Over 50 percent of youth receive a referral to TASC without the benefit of a screening or assessment to determine whether substance use is potentially a need underlying youth's delinquent behavior that require further evaluation.
- Judges vary in their practices regarding case review hearings to evaluate progress and compliance with supervision conditions, but cases are frequently re-calendared every three months, which requires probation officers to prepare written reports and appear in court.

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Historically, staff have used risk/needs assessments post disposition in a limited way to guide case planning and service delivery.

- Front line staff have generally not valued the use of risk and needs assessments (YASI) as a youth/family engagement, case planning, or service matching tool, and seen its completion as purely an administrative requirement.
- Approximately 40 percent of youth placed on supervision and probation have a missing risk assessment (doesn't mean wasn't conducted).
- Training on the purpose of risk/needs assessments and quality assurance to ensure assessments are completed, completed with fidelity, and the results are used appropriately, has been limited.
- Data collection, analysis, and reporting on risk/needs assessment results and whether youth are being matched to the right level, length, and type of supervision and services accordingly has been limited. Similarly, risk and needs assessment data has not been used as a service and resource planning tool.

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The adoption of the Juvenile Risk Assessment (JRA) offers key opportunities and challenges for shifting towards a more research-based approach.

- Probation leadership and managers are committed to the JRA and using it pre and post disposition to guide supervision contacts, case planning, and the use of services.
- The JRA will incorporate, rather than duplicate, the social history; include a standardized case plan; and ultimately, will be completed electronically.
- Probation master trainers are actively training supervisors and front line staff in the JRA, and feedback from the training has been positive.
- Probation leadership is working hard to establish the preconditions necessary for the successful implementation of the JRA, but key gaps remain:
 - Robust scoring and quality assurance protocols to ensure the tool is scoring accurately given the particular nuances of Cook County's juvenile justice system, and that officers are scoring the tool accurately.
 - Formal strategy/plan for ongoing engagement and education for judges, attorneys, and service providers and obtaining their buy-in and establishing protocols for using the JRA pre and post disposition.
 - Formal strategy/plan for ongoing engagement/involvement of supervisors and front line staff to obtain their buy-in for using the JRA and troubleshooting operational challenges.
 - Formal strategy/plan for establishing a cohesive and integrated policy, quality assurance, and data infrastructure to ensure the JRA is completed and used appropriately, including on what type of recommendations that staff make to the court and in what fashion.

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Assessment and Dispositions: Key Takeaways

1. The number of youth disposed to supervision, probation, and state commitment have declined substantially, and are primarily, and increasingly, used for youth who have multiple prior referrals and committed felony offenses.
2. Dispositional decisions are just starting to be informed by information on youth's risks and needs; sentences are long; and probation requirements are not individualized to youth's risks, needs, or the harm caused to victims and communities.
3. The adoption of the JRA provides opportunities, as well as new challenges, to using risks/needs assessments consistently and with fidelity to guide supervision and service decisions pre and post disposition.

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Assessments and Dispositions: Potential Opportunities for Improvement

1. Ensure that probation, court, and other stakeholder expectations; probation staff training, caseloads, and supervision requirements; graduated responses; and services/resources match the high-risk nature of the population being disposed to community supervision.
2. Establish a JRA implementation steering committee comprised of judges, attorneys, service providers and other stakeholders to establish a shared vision and policies/templates for how the JRA will be used pre disposition, including:
 - Understanding of the tool, its research base and purpose, and value
 - When and how the JRA will be conducted
 - Nature/scope of recommendations provided to the court (e.g. level, length, type of supervision and services and conditions)
 - Dispositional guidelines
 - Pre-dispositional report template, and with whom/how this report is shared/presented
 - Opportunities to reduce/align probation sentence lengths with youth's risk level/offenses
 - Opportunities to tailor/individualize probation conditions to youth assessed risks/needs

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Assessments and Dispositions: Potential Opportunities for Improvement (cont.)



3. Establish a JRA implementation committee comprised of key probation managers and front line staff to cultivate staff champions, establish and promulgate necessary policies and procedures, monitor the JRA roll-out and use, and troubleshoot operational challenges.
4. To the extent feasible given limited resources, develop a robust short and long-term JRA quality assurance and data collection/analysis/reporting/use plan to ensure the tool is working accurately for Cook County and that officers are completing/using it appropriately.
5. Eliminate the standard use of community service as a condition of probation; consider opportunities to use resources more efficiently to enforce community service requirements when ordered; and employ restorative justice practice requirements—such as victim mediation—that have been shown by research to improve youth outcomes and victim satisfaction with the justice system.
6. Adopt mental health/substance use/trauma screening tools for use with all youth pre-disposition, and eliminate the standard condition of referrals to TASC unless substance use screenings indicate the need for further assessment.
7. Explore opportunities to standardize and streamline the current approach to post-dispositional case progress reviews, with a particular focus on limiting the time that probation officers spend in court and maximizing the time spent providing supervision and services.
8. Explore the possibility of creating a standardized progress review report template that is based on both conditions of supervision and youth's treatment goals/case plan.

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The Work Ahead

March/April	May/June
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task force meeting #4: Supervision and services • Ongoing data analysis, system assessment and stakeholder engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task force meeting #5: Release of report and development of action plan

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Appendix C



The third key area of the probation systems review focuses on supervision and service delivery.

Key Areas of Review and Assessment Questions



Supervision: what level, type, and quality of community supervision do youth receive?



Service Delivery: To what extent do youth receive services matched to their key needs and that are demonstrated as effective?

Over five years of case-level data from Cook County's data system informs the analysis presented today.

Data Reviewed	Source
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Client demographics• Referrals to juvenile court• Petitions• Charges• Interventions• Court orders• Custodial status• Custodial petitions• Conditions of court orders• Detention screening• YASI risk levels	JEMS (Juvenile Probation computer system)

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There are some key caveats to note about the data analysis.

- The analysis is based on youth starting supervision, probation, or intensive probation supervision who were referred to juvenile court between 2012 and 2017.
- If a youth had more than one community supervision that were of the same type and were continuous, the periods were grouped together and counted as one.
- Re-referrals are tracked in the juvenile and not into the criminal justice system—thus, the re-referral rate for youth 17 and older is likely significantly under-represented.
- Service information includes only those interventions which are tracked in JEMS.
- Detailed, case-level data on the services that youth receive, particularly in the community, and the outcomes of these services, are not available.

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Extensive focus groups and interviews with system stakeholders also inform the analysis presented today.

- Probation leadership
- Service providers
- Probation supervisors
- Prosecutors
- Probation officers
- Defense attorneys
- Probation clinical staff
- Judges

Best Practices in Supervision and Service Delivery

- ❖ Use validated risk/needs assessments to match youth with the most appropriate length and intensity of supervision, increasing contacts/supervision duration for high risk youth and limiting contacts/duration for youth have a lower risk of reoffending.
- ❖ Use validated risk/needs assessments to guide case planning, service matching, and to assess youth's treatment progress.
- ❖ Focus supervision primarily on youth/family engagement and promoting positive youth behavior change rather than surveillance and compliance.
- ❖ Employ a developmentally appropriate approach to supervision and services, including youth and family engagement and the use of graduated incentives and sanctions to motivate behavior change and hold youth accountable for their misbehavior.
- ❖ Connect youth to services that are research-based; establish ongoing quality assurance protocols to promote service fidelity; and track service provider/system performance and youth outcomes.

The Department has made significant strides towards adopting a more research-based approach to supervision and services.

Probation 2.0

- Leadership engaged in extensive planning process to establish a vision for how the Department can adopt what research shows works to improve youth outcomes.

Emphasis on risk-based decision making

- Prioritizing staff time and Department resources on higher-risk youth and aligning case contacts accordingly, and adopted JRA to make informed supervision and service decisions pre and post disposition.

Investment in evidence-based services and community partnerships

- Increased effort to implement evidence-based programs in the community, strengthen mental health and substance use services, and partner with community organizations and collaboratives.

Commitment to improvement and staff-buy

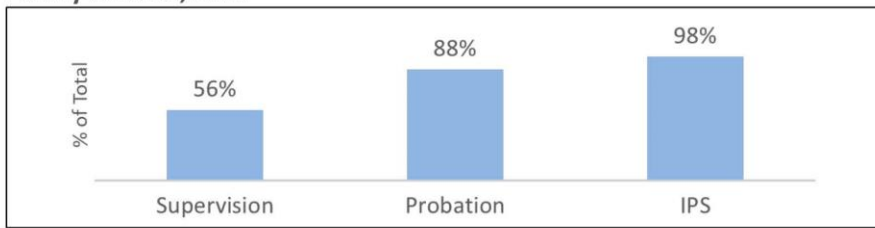
- Probation 2.0 and Probation Systems Review process demonstrate Department willingness to identify and advance opportunities for system-wide improvement.

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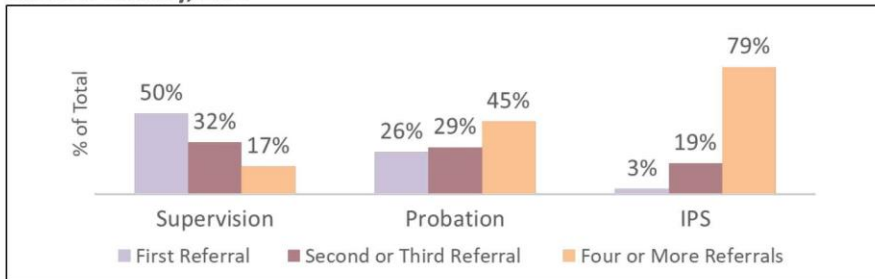


Youth placed on some form of community supervision have typically committed a felony offense and have multiple prior referrals.

Felony Offense, 2017



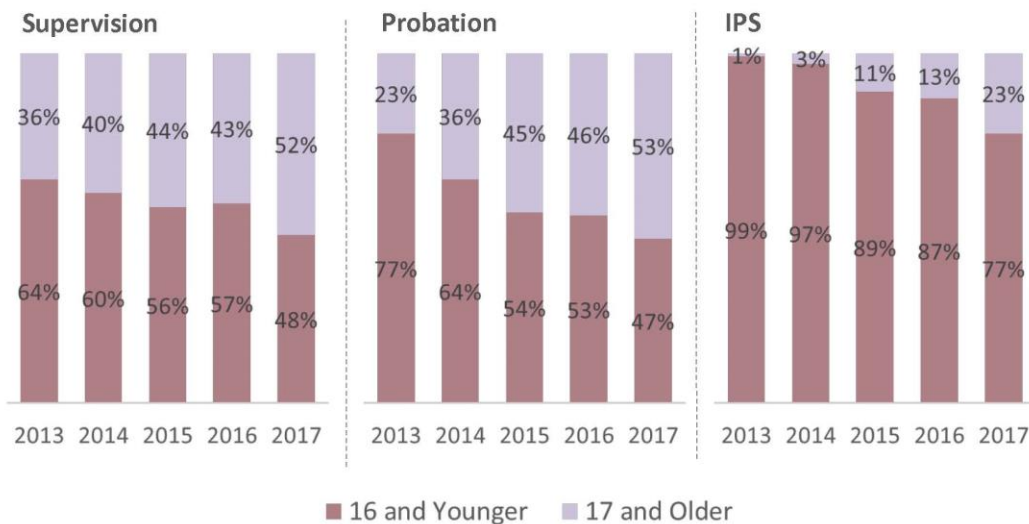
Referral History, 2017



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The proportion of youth age 17 and older on all forms of supervision has steadily increased.

Age of Youth at Start of Community Supervision, 2013 – 2017



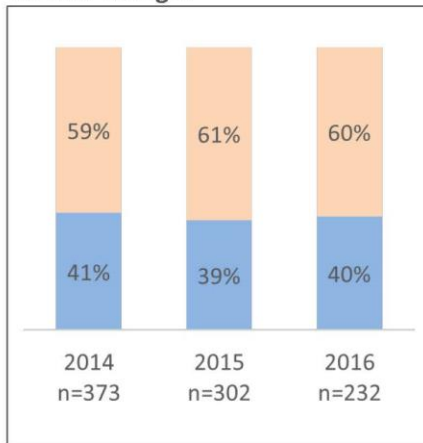
Note: Age was unknown for less than 1% of cases.

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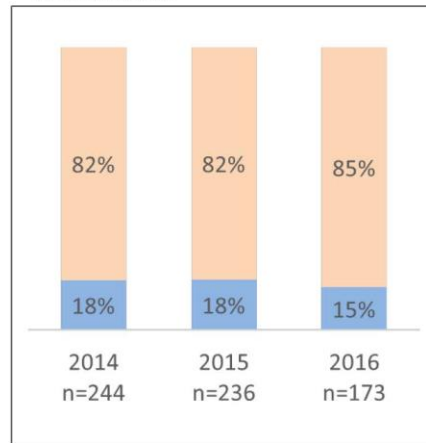
Approximately 40% of youth ages 16 and younger placed on supervision are re-referred within one year.

Re-referral within One Year of Starting Supervision by Age, 2014 – 2016

16 and Younger



17 and Older



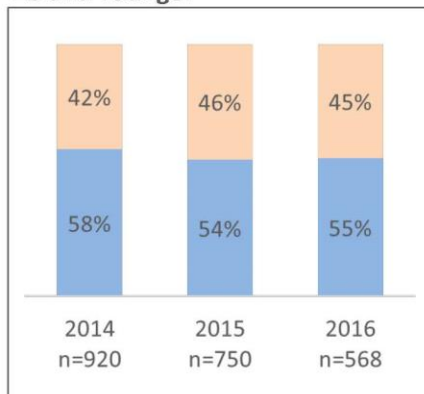
■ Not Re-referred in Year 1
■ Re-referred in Year 1

Note: Less than 10% of youth on supervision received a technical violation

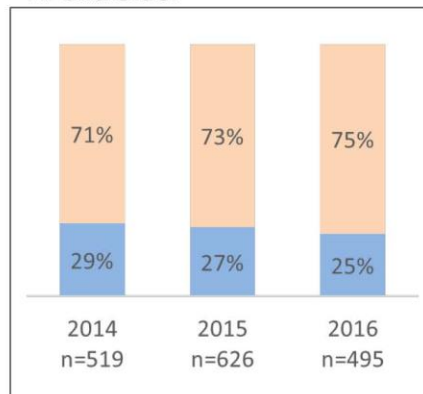
Approximately 55% of youth ages 16 and younger on probation are re-referred within one year.

Re-referral within One Year of Starting Probation by Age, 2014 – 2016

16 and Younger



17 and Older

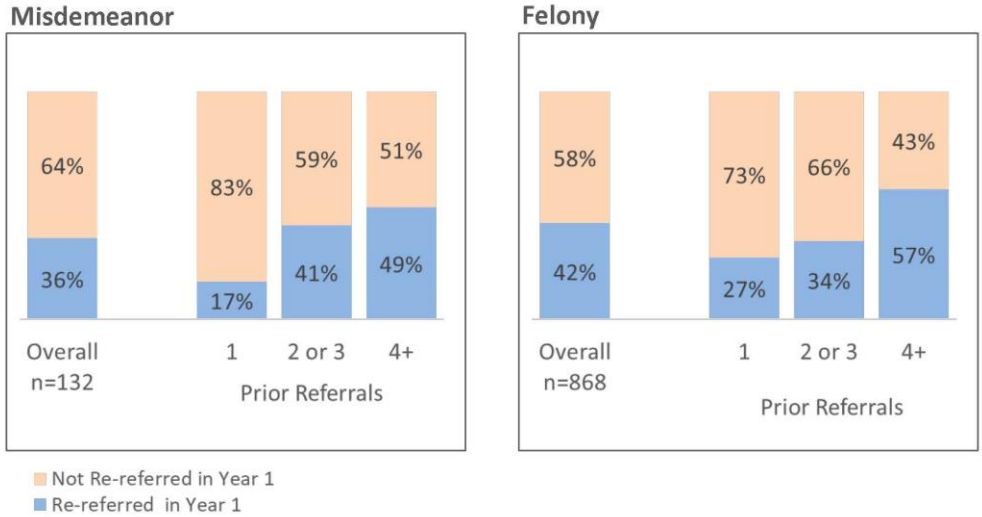


■ Not Re-referred in Year 1
■ Re-referred in Year 1

Note: Approximately 25% of youth on probation received a technical violation

Prior offenses, rather than the nature of the presenting offense, most closely corresponds with re-referral rates in Cook County.

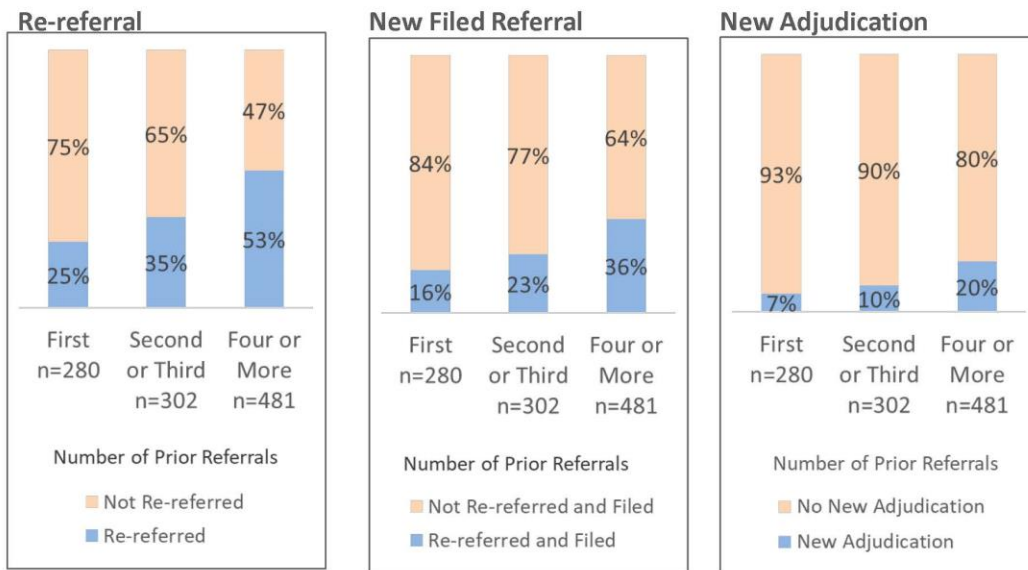
Re-referral for Youth Starting Probation by Offense Type and Referral History, 2016



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Re-referral, re-filing, and re-adjudication rates differ substantially, particularly for youth with multiple prior offenses.

Recidivism for Youth Starting Probation, 2016



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A lack of a unifying vision and corresponding policies/practices across justice agencies and amongst Department management and front line staff hinders the effectiveness of the current approach to supervision.

Key Tensions in the Department/System's Current Supervision Approach	
Prevention and Needs	Intervention and Risk
Unit/Individual Discretion	Structured Decision Making/Standardization
Focus on Conditions of Supervision	Focus on Positive Youth Behavior Change
Accountability/Punishment	Incentives, Sanctions, and Youth/Family Engagement
Oversight	Quality Assurance, Performance Evaluation, and Accountability

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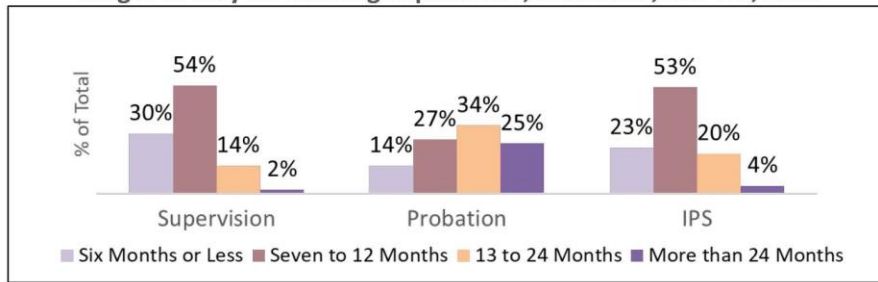
Opportunities likely exist to deploy supervision staff and related resources more efficiently to identify and address youth's risks/needs.

- Approaches to assigning probation officers new cases and conducting the initial risk assessment vary across units.
- Youth can have their risks and needs assessed in multiple, overlapping, and potentially uncoordinated ways through their probation officer, the clinical unit, the court, TASC, and service providers.
- Youth can have multiple probation officers, including officers for supervision, community service (one third to one half of all youth), electronic monitoring, evening reporting, clinical, and an education advocate.
- While judges vary in their post-dispositional case review practices, it's common to conduct quarterly in-person progress reviews, with substantial implications for officers (and youth and families) time accordingly.

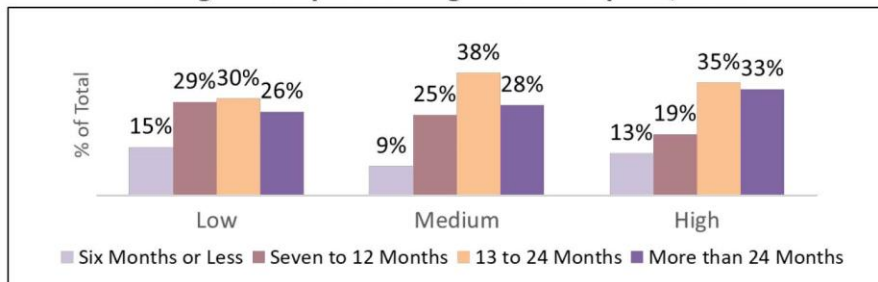
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Lengths of time on probation are not consistently based on risk level and are extensive for many youth.

Length of Stay for Starting Supervision, Probation, and IPS, 2015



Length of Stay for Starting Probation by Risk, 2015

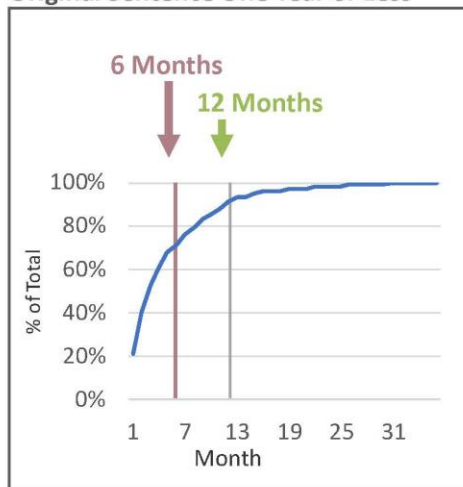


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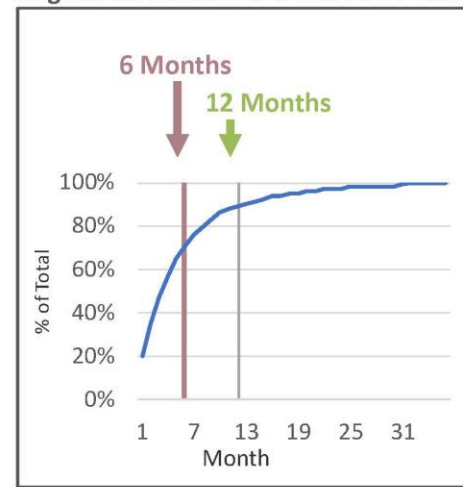
Approximately 90% of reoffending/technical violation events occur within the first 6-12 months that youth are placed on probation.

Time to First Technical Violation or Re-referral from Probation Start, 2014

Original Sentence One Year or Less



Original Sentence More Than One Year



Note: Total is the number of youth who had a referral or technical violation within three years of starting probation.

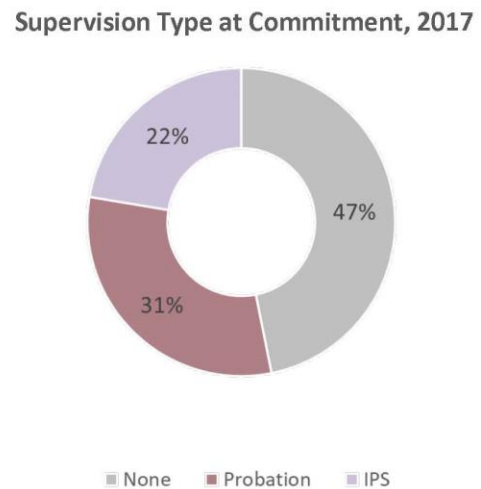
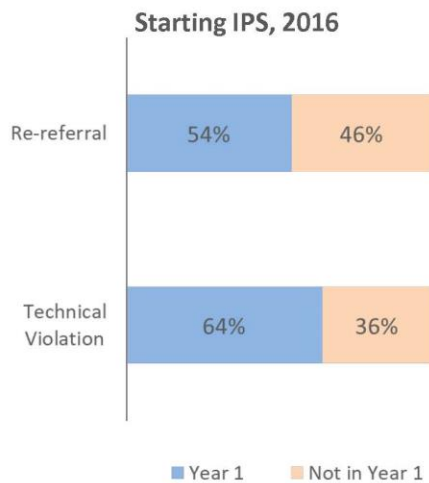
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The highest risk cases under system supervision require a more intentional supervision (and service) approach.

- Intensive probation supervision is:
 - Not currently reserved for the highest risk youth under system supervision;
 - Often court ordered even when risk assessments would not indicate it's warranted;
 - Focused on intensive surveillance but not necessarily intensive service delivery.
- No formal agency-wide oversight processes exist targeted at youth who are at high risk for perpetuating or being victims of violence, including;
 - Flagging such cases and tracking them accordingly;
 - Ensuring these youth receive intensive supervision and services;
 - Regularly monitoring case progress/managing risk; and
 - Potentially collaborating with law enforcement and community stakeholders.

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Approximately half of youth on intensive probation supervision are re-referred within 12 months and two-thirds receive technical violations.



***Approximately 20% of IPS cases end in a commitment to IDJJ**

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Supervision: Key Takeaways

1. Over 50% of youth on probation and IPS are re-referred within 12 months, with those youth with multiple prior offenses being most likely to be re-referred.
2. Unresolved tensions on supervision decision-making and approaches within and amongst system stakeholders—and a corresponding lack of system and department-wide policies, practices, and associated quality assurance protocols—are foundational barriers to improving public safety and youth outcomes.
3. Opportunities exist to better deploy probation officers' time and related resources more efficiently, including through making more risk-based decisions at multiple points throughout the system.

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Supervision: Potential Opportunities for Improvement

1. Formalize the **foundational vision for Cook County's approach to supervision**; a corresponding staff model; set of concrete policies, practices, tools, and templates; and develop a detailed implementation, staff communication and training, quality assurance, and evaluation plan.
 - a) Convene system stakeholders to establish a coordinated vision and plan for responding to delinquent behavior, including diverting youth that have a low-risk of reoffending; **making risk based decisions** on who requires supervision and what level/length; and identifying more formal ways of ensuring youth who don't require juvenile justice system supervision still receive needed services.
 - b) **Convene Department staff** to discuss and share this vision and promote staff-buy-in.
 - c) **Prioritize JRA implementation** and expand/strengthen staff and stakeholder education and training, reporting and recommendation protocols, and quality assurance capacity.
 - d) Establish a detailed **policy on the development of case plans**, including involvement of youth/families.
 - e) **Standardize case assignment, assessment, supervision**, and other key practices across all units.
 - f) Establish a detailed policy, and potentially associated curricula, to guide the **substance of case contacts**.
 - g) Develop a more formalized system of **incentives and graduated responses**.
 - h) Require regular **family contacts**, and develop/pilot a youth/family treatment team meeting model.
 - i) **Require annual training for all staff**—and provide it for other system stakeholders—on adolescent development, RNR, evidence based practices, and youth/family engagement/motivational techniques.

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Supervision: Potential Opportunities for Improvement (cont.)

2. Examine the existing supervision staffing model and identify opportunities to **redeploy staff to high priority areas** (e.g. supervision of high risk cases, quality assurance, etc.), and/or to improve coordination and the efficient use of time amongst all staff assigned to the same case.
3. Procure resources to develop a **robust quality assurance and research unit** that can evaluate implementation progress, direct needed improvements, and assist the department to collect, analyze, share, and use data to improve supervision (and service) practices and outcomes.
 - a) Track recidivism on at least an annual basis, including into the criminal justice system, and analyze and report the data by risk level and other key demographics/variables.
4. Strive to **partner with judges** to:
 - a) Minimize lengths of supervision and base lengths/intensity on risk/treatment goals;
 - b) Standardize the method for including supervision/service recommendations in pre-dispositional reports;
 - c) Develop a standardized case progress report template;
 - d) Minimize/standardized the frequency of in-person review hearings.
5. Establish criteria for **flagging a case as high risk for violence**; prioritize these cases for intensive supervision and services; and adopt a specialized case conferencing/oversight process.

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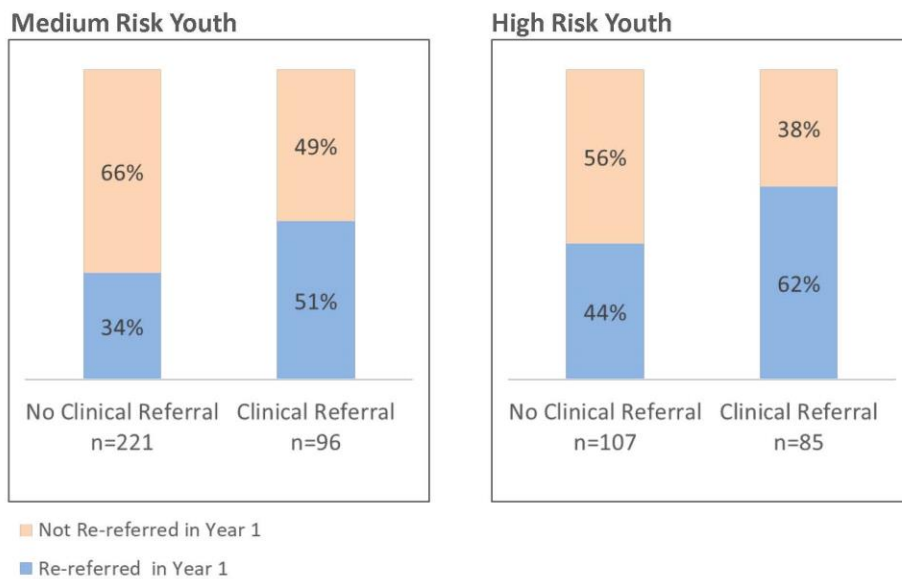
The Department lacks specific protocols for ensuring youth are matched to appropriate services and for officers' roles in service referrals/delivery.

- Officers generally don't rely on risk assessments to help them to identify youth's criminogenic and related service needs, and validated mental health, substance use, and trauma screenings are not routinely conducted.
- The department developed an online resource guide a number of years ago but officers generally rely on their individual or unit's knowledge of existing services to make service referral decisions and their own intuition on how best to match youth to these interventions.
- Providers are typically not trained in RNR or other best practices for working with justice-involved youth, and don't routinely receive risk assessment results or case plans.
- There is limited specific policies for officers' responsibilities for making service referrals and overseeing/coordinating treatment, with providers reporting that service use and collaboration varies widely across officers and a lack of treatment/family team meetings and joint contacts.
- No specific interventions or wrap-around service models exist specifically for the highest risk youth under system supervision at risk of out of home placement and/or violence.

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Youth of similar risk levels that are referred to the clinical unit have higher re-referral rates.

Re-referral for Youth Starting Probation, 2016



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Limited system-wide efforts have been made to identify and promote the development/use of services demonstrated by research as effective for justice involved youth and to assess service quality.

- Service availability and gaps varies widely across the county:
 - The department has invested in evidence-based family therapy and cognitive behavioral approaches, but there appears to be a general dearth of such services that specifically target criminogenic needs, as well as mental health treatment, in the community.
- The Department generally relies on externally funded, as opposed to contracted, services, which makes quality control difficult.
 - At the same time, the Department and other city/county agencies have made limited efforts to identify service quality principles and delivery expectations for either the provider community or officers.
- Outside of the clinical unit, largely due to budget limitations, limited formal tools/processes exists to:
 - Assess service use or quality;
 - Obtain standardized reports or collect data on service use or completion; and
 - Evaluate the impact of specific services on recidivism and other youth outcomes.

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Opportunities exist for the Department and other justice agencies to take a more proactive role in partnering with the community to shape the service system for justice-involved youth.

- There are numerous city, county, and private funding sources for community services.
 - Providers believe it would help for the Department to more actively partner with these entities to shape funding streams specific to addressing the needs of justice-involved youth.
- Numerous funder and provider collaboratives exist on services for at-risk youth, and the Department has a seat at many of these tables.
 - It's unclear that these efforts are coordinated and ensuring investments are targeted at high-risk youth/communities and promoting interventions proven effective.
 - Providers report that their relationships are primarily at the individual rather than Department-level, which limits opportunities to ensure resources are used efficiently and to more strategically build provider service capacity to effectively justice-involved youth.
- The existence of robust, community-led service and support systems—such as the restorative justice hubs—offer the Department the opportunity to pilot innovative approaches to probation focused on partnering with communities to address youth's risks/needs and promote their long term positive development.

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Service Delivery: Key Takeaways

1. The Department lacks consistent policies, protocols, and tools for officers for matching youth with appropriate services and coordinating and overseeing this treatment.
2. The Department, and the larger county-wide system, does not have a formal structure in place to promote what research shows works to improve outcomes for youth, and to build provider service capacity, assess quality, and hold providers accountable accordingly.
3. Opportunities exist to more proactively shape the service system and public/private investments for youth involved in the juvenile justice system and at risk of violence.

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Service Delivery: Potential Opportunities for Improvement

1. Establish specific policies that outline **probation officers' roles and responsibilities for making appropriate service referrals**, ensuring youth engage with these services and make sufficient progress, and for coordination with service providers. Consider piloting a **family/team case planning/conference model**.
2. Establish a **service resource guide or registry and associated matrices** for staff working in different communities that outlines specific risk and need eligibility criteria for key external services (CBT, substance use, family therapy, etc.), and referral policies and points of contact for each intervention.
3. Standardize the **sharing of risk assessment summary results and case plans with providers** when making referrals, and provide an **annual training for providers** on RNR and evidence based practices for justice-involved youth.
4. Establish an **intensive wrap-around service model**, in conjunction with intensive supervision and in partnership with designated providers, for all youth identified as at high risk for perpetuating or being victims of violence.

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Service Delivery: Potential Opportunities for Improvement

6. Strive to take a more active role in **shaping the availability, funding for, and quality of services** for youth in the juvenile justice system.
 - a) Establish **research-based criteria** to guide the Department's use of contracted, fee-for-service, and external services.
 - b) Convene and partner with city, county, and private funders (as well as with other city/county public agencies) to share this criteria, service needs/gaps, and to **design funding streams that specifically target addressing the criminogenic needs of justice-involved youth**, including those at risk of perpetuating or being victims of violence.
 - c) Explore the possibility of developing an **advisory group of community-based providers** focused on better meeting the needs of justice-involved youth and/or establishing a working group within existing provider collaboratives.
 - d) Use these groups to: develop collaborative service initiatives; promote the use of research-based services; **pilot the use of a validated service quality assessment; pilot a community-based, positive youth development probation model;** and standardize data collection, reporting, and evaluation protocols.
 - e) Shift staffing resources and/or obtain new resources to **employ resource coordinators** that can oversee activities with providers and help hold officers accountable for adhering to service policies as well as to bolster service quality assurance and evaluation capacity.
 - f) Consider cultivating service programs/supports specifically **for older youth**.

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The Work Ahead

June

- Provide summary report to the Department and support development of action plan



Appendix D
Cook County Juvenile Probation
Probation System Review Recommendations

Diversion

1. Establish a shared vision and operational plan across agencies for how the front end of the juvenile justice system should function to effectively protect public safety, and what resources are required to accomplish this goal, and share this proposal with city, county, and private stakeholders/funders.
2. Centralize the intake function for all youth referred to the juvenile justice system in partnership with law enforcement, state’s attorney’s office, and probation—including conducting risk and needs screening; making diversion recommendations; and overseeing diversion services—and consider opportunities for efficiencies given the current station adjustment process (i.e. consider a centralized, streamlined assessment center model).
3. Adopt risk screening tools to objectively identify youth’s risk of reoffending and to guide diversion and supervision decisions accordingly.
4. Adopt mental health, substance use, and/or trauma screening tools to guide diversion decisions, and to match youth with the most appropriate services (in or outside of the juvenile justice system).
5. Establish a more robust continuum of diversion supervision, services, and restorative justice practices, and strengthen diversion program oversight and quality assurance.
6. Establish key diversion performance measures, regularly collect and analyze data on these measures, and produce at least an annual report for all stakeholders on diversion participation and outcomes.

Detention

7. Explore strategies to streamline the offering/use of alternatives to detention (and related allocation of resources) at detention hearings such that the majority of youth are placed on a single alternative—if multiple alternatives are employed, establish policies to require collaborative case planning amongst all parties.
8. Establish a formal policy/continuum of graduated responses for youth participating in detention alternatives.
9. Explore opportunities to establish a required case conference between probation and detention staff for youth in detention prior to disposition, particularly for youth identified as having mental health/ substance use/trauma needs.

Assessments

10. Establish a JRA implementation steering committee comprised of judges, attorneys, service providers and other stakeholders to establish a shared vision and policies/templates for how the JRA will be used pre-disposition, including:
 - a. Understanding of the tool, its research base and purpose, and value;
 - b. When and how the JRA will be conducted;

- c. Nature/scope of recommendations provided to the court (e.g. level, length, type of supervision and services and conditions);
 - d. Dispositional guidelines, including the use of IPS;
 - e. Pre-dispositional report template, and with whom/how this report is shared/presented;
 - f. Opportunities to reduce/align probation sentence lengths with youth's risk level/offenses;
11. To the extent feasible given limited resources, develop a robust short and long-term JRA quality assurance and data collection/analysis/reporting/use plan to ensure the tool is working accurately for Cook County and that officers are completing/using it appropriately.
 12. Adopt mental health/substance use/trauma screening tools for use with all youth pre-disposition, and eliminate the standard condition of referrals to TASC unless substance use screenings indicate the need for further assessments.

Disposition

13. Ensure that probation, court, and other stakeholder expectations; probation staff training, caseloads, and supervision requirements; graduated responses; and services/resources match the high-risk nature of the population being disposed to community supervision.
14. Eliminate the standard use of community service as a condition of probation; consider opportunities to use resources more efficiently to enforce community service requirements when ordered; and employ restorative justice practice requirements—such as victim mediation—that have been shown by research to improve youth outcomes and victim satisfaction with the justice system.
15. Explore opportunities to standardize and streamline the current approach to post-dispositional case progress reviews, with a particular focus on limiting the time that probation officers spend in court and maximizing the time spent providing supervision and services.
16. Explore the possibility of creating a standardized progress review report template that is based on both conditions of supervision and youth's treatment goals/case plan.
17. Formalize the foundational vision for Cook County's approach to supervision; a corresponding staff model; set of concrete policies, practices, tools, and templates; and develop a detailed implementation, staff communication and training, quality assurance, and evaluation plan.
 - j. Convene system stakeholders to establish a coordinated vision and plan for responding to delinquent behavior, including diverting youth that have a low-risk of reoffending; making risk-based decisions on who requires supervision and what level/length; and identifying more formal ways of ensuring youth who don't require juvenile justice system supervision still receive needed services.
 - k. Convene Department staff to discuss and share this vision and promote staff-buy-in.
 - l. Prioritize JRA implementation and expand/strengthen staff and stakeholder education and training, reporting and recommendation protocols, and quality assurance capacity.
 - m. Establish a detailed policy on the development of case plans, including involvement of youth/families.
 - n. Standardize case assignment, assessment, supervision, and other key practices across all units.
 - o. Establish a detailed policy, and potentially associated curricula, to guide the substance of case contacts.
 - p. Develop a more formalized system of incentives and graduated responses.

- q. Require regular family contacts, and develop/pilot a youth/family treatment team meeting model.
 - r. Require annual training for all staff—and provide it for other system stakeholders—on adolescent development, RNR, evidence-based practices, and youth/family engagement/motivational techniques.
18. Examine the existing supervision staffing model and identify opportunities to redeploy staff to high priority areas (e.g. supervision of high-risk cases, quality assurance, etc.), and/or to improve coordination and the efficient use of time amongst all staff assigned to the same case.
 19. Procure resources to develop a robust quality assurance and research unit that can evaluate implementation progress, direct needed improvements, and assist the department to collect, analyze, share, and use data to improve supervision (and service) practices and outcomes.
 20. Track recidivism on at least an annual basis, including into the criminal justice system, and analyze and report the data by risk level and other key demographics/variables.
 21. Partner with judges to:
 - a. Minimize lengths of supervision and base lengths/intensity on risk/treatment goals;
 - b. Standardize the method for including supervision/service recommendations in pre-dispositional reports;
 - c. Develop a standardized case progress report template;
 - d. Minimize/standardized the frequency of in-person review hearings.
 22. Establish criteria for flagging a case as high risk for violence; prioritize these cases for intensive supervision and services; and adopt a specialized case conferencing/oversight process.

Services

23. Establish specific policies that outline probation officers' roles and responsibilities for making appropriate service referrals, ensuring youth engage with these services and make sufficient progress, and for coordination with service providers. Consider piloting a family/team case planning/conference model.
24. Establish a service resource guide or registry and associated matrices for staff working in different communities that outlines specific risk and need eligibility criteria for key external services (CBT, substance use, family therapy, etc.), and referral policies and points of contact for each intervention.
25. Standardize the sharing of risk assessment summary results and case plans with providers when making referrals, and provide an annual training for providers on RNR and evidence-based practices for justice-involved youth.
26. Establish an intensive wrap-around service model, in conjunction with intensive supervision and in partnership with designated providers, for all youth identified as at high risk for perpetuating or being victims of violence.
27. Take a more active role in shaping the availability, funding for, and quality of services for youth in the juvenile justice system.
 - a. Establish research-based criteria to guide the Department's use of contracted, fee-for-service, and external services.
 - b. Convene and partner with city, county, and private funders (as well as with other city/county public agencies) to share this criteria, service needs/gaps, and to design funding

- streams that specifically target addressing the criminogenic needs of justice-involved youth, including those at risk of perpetuating or being victims of violence.
- c. Explore the possibility of developing an advisory group of community-based providers focused on better meeting the needs of justice-involved youth and/or establishing a working group within existing provider collaborations.
 - d. Use these groups to: develop collaborative service initiatives; promote the use of research-based services; pilot the use of a validated service quality assessment; pilot a community-based, positive youth development probation model; and standardize data collection, reporting, and evaluation protocols.
 - e. Shift staffing resources and/or obtain new resources to employ resource coordinators that can oversee activities with providers and help hold officers accountable for adhering to service policies as well as to bolster service quality assurance and evaluation capacity.
 - f. Cultivate service programs/supports specifically for older youth.

Appendix G
Probation System Review Action Plan

To be developed June 20, 2019 through collaborative discussions with Cook County Juvenile Probation and the Consultant Team.