

JUVENILE SERVICES COMMITTEE AND NEBRASKA COALITION FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE

2017 Joint Annual Report

Submitted by the Juvenile Services Committee Pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat.
§43-4203(2)(b)

Submitted by the Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice pursuant to Neb.
Rev. Stat. §43-2412(1)(d)



Juvenile Services Committee and NCJJ Annual Report

Mission Statement: Design a comprehensive, accountable, culturally competent, continuum of care in the juvenile justice system that meets the needs of families and youth while maintaining public safety.

Committee Goal: To work collaboratively with the executive, legislative, judicial, and county branches of government, the Nebraska Children’s Commission, and other key stakeholders to establish and support the development of the ideal juvenile justice system that will prevent children and youth from entering or becoming more deeply involved in the juvenile justice system.

Strategic Goals

Legislative Reform: Promote legislative reform in line with best practices in juvenile justice.

Placement and Needs Mapping: Identify the placement needs of the juvenile justice population and the resources available to these youth throughout the state.

Evaluation and Assessment: Apply the highest standards of evaluation, assessment, and research in the social sciences to the understanding existing needs of youth in Nebraska.

Out of Home Placements: Review and make recommendations related to best practices in the juvenile justice out-of-home continuum of care, including transition supports.

Cross-System Coordination: Identify areas of potential cross-system collaboration, and promote best practices to coordinate services and programs.

Contact Information

For more information or to get involved with the Juvenile Services Committee, please visit childrens.nebraska.gov, or email necc.contact@nebraska.gov.

JOINT LETTER FROM JUVENILE SERVICES COMMITTEE AND
NEBRASKA COALITION FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE CHAIRS

November 11, 2017

Dear Juvenile Justice Stakeholders,

The Juvenile Services Committee (“Committee”) of the Nebraska Children’s Commission and the Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice (“NCJJ”) present this joint report as a thoughtful contribution to the reform of juvenile justice in Nebraska and in compliance with Neb. Rev. Stat. 43-4203 and 43-2412(1)(d). Building a strong state requires youth to grow into healthy and productive adults, and the juvenile justice system plays an essential role in helping youth access the support they need to reach their full potential in their communities. Both groups are committed to community safety and youth well-being to grow adults who participate in Nebraska’s economy, workforce, and democracy. The recommendations contained in this joint report support the ongoing juvenile justice reform efforts, and reflect a collaborative, open, and inclusive process of discussion and information sharing.

The Committee and NCJJ made the decision to collaborate in order to eliminate duplication, coordinate work to support juvenile justice, and make the most responsible use of resources possible. Following Nebraska’s decision to no longer seek Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Title II Federal Juvenile grant funding, both bodies believed it is essential for the NCJJ to continue its statutory functions related to Community Based Aid funding, Disproportionate Minority Contact, and its subcommittees. The decision related to funding is discussed in more detail in this report.

Nebraska’s work towards a streamlined, collaborative, and rehabilitative- focused juvenile justice system will be on-going. However, with the continued support from your office, the diligent work of our state’s communities, and the Committee and the NCJJ’s dedication to connecting all components of this process, the work will find positive change for Nebraska youth, families and communities. Both groups are available as a resource to the Governor, Legislature, Judicial Branch, and any agency working to improve outcomes for youth involved in or at risk of becoming involved in the juvenile justice system.

Sincerely

Cassandra Blakely

Cassandra Blakely
NCJJ Chairperson



Nicole Brundo
Committee Co-Chair



Kim Hawekotte
Committee Co-Chair

Juveniles Services Committee and Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice Collaboration

Juvenile justice policies and programs are essential to the well-being of youth and safety of communities. When youth who are in or at risk of entering the juvenile justice system can remain safely in their communities, they can reach their full potential. Nebraska's economy and workforce rely on healthy youth living, working, and raising families safely in their communities. Nebraska has made juvenile justice a priority with stakeholders working together to identify innovative solutions to the challenges facing youth who are involved with or at risk of becoming involved with the juvenile justice system.

In order to enhance collaboration, coordinate initiatives, and increase the impact and efficacy of juvenile justice reform in Nebraska, the Juvenile Services Committee of the Nebraska Children's Commission and the Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice have begun collaborating in the form of joint meetings, joint reporting, and inclusive workgroups. This collaboration will allow the most coordinated response possible for juvenile justice reform, while allowing each body to meet its statutory obligations in the most efficient way possible.

These groups will work together in 2018 towards juvenile justice reform and improved outcomes for Nebraska's youth and families. Both groups remain willing to serve as a resource to the Legislature, Governor, Judicial Branch, and state agencies for any juvenile justice related issue or initiative.

Juvenile Services Committee Mission

Design a comprehensive, accountable, culturally competent, continuum of care in the juvenile justice system that meets the needs of families and youth while maintaining public safety.

Juvenile Services Committee Goal

To work collaboratively with the executive, legislative, judicial, and county branches of government, the Nebraska Children's Commission, and other key stakeholders to establish and support the development of the ideal juvenile justice system that will prevent children and youth from entering or becoming more deeply involved in the juvenile justice system.

Strategic Goals

Legislative Reform: Promote legislative reform in line with best practices in juvenile justice.

Placement and Needs Mapping: Identify the placement needs of the juvenile justice population and the resources available to these youth throughout the state.

Evaluation and Assessment: Apply the highest standards of evaluation, assessment, and research in the social sciences to the understanding of existing needs of youth in Nebraska.

Out-of-Home Placements and Transitions: Review and make recommendations related to best practices in the juvenile justice out-of-home continuum of care, including transition supports.

Cross-System Coordination: Identify areas of potential cross-system collaboration, and promote best practices to coordinate services and program.

Disproportionate Minority Contact: Identify and promote best practices to prevent racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system.

Goal Number One: Legislative Reform

Promote legislative reform in line with best practices in juvenile justice.

Practical juvenile justice policy based on proven, evidence based interventions is essential to build well-being for youth. Advances in juvenile justice practice must be supported by legislation and stakeholder buy-in. As juvenile justice reform continues in Nebraska, legislation is an important tool in improving outcomes for youth.

The Joint Legislative workgroup (Chairperson Christine Henningsen) is comprised of members of the Juvenile Services Committee and the NCJJ, and includes representation from all three branches of government, service providers, advocates, and other juvenile justice. The complex issues facing youth in the juvenile justice system can be solved by collaboration and innovation to help all youth reach their full potential.

Recommendations

- Legislative reform should promote best practices related to juvenile justice.
- Current juvenile justice legislation must be monitored to identify gaps that prevent adoption of best practices.
- Legislation should support and promote compliance with the four core requirements of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention:
 - Removal of status and non-offenders from secure detention facilities;
 - Separation of adult and juvenile offenders throughout incarceration;
 - Removal of juveniles from adult jails and lockups, and
 - That state must collect and analyze data to identify and address any disproportionate numbers of minority youth at specific decision points throughout the juvenile justice system.
- Sealing and expunging practices can have dramatic effects on the life course of a youth. If a youth has a juvenile justice criminal record, this can prevent youth from reaching their education and career goals. Best practices in juvenile record sealing and expunging should be a priority in legislative reform to allow youth to thrive and reach their full potential. The Legislative Workgroup will continue to examine and promote best practices in sealing and expungement.
- Change statutory language to require that all youth have legal counsel and appropriate adequate funding for that requirement. Legislation should encourage diversion programs. Counties are encouraged to adopt the best practice of offering diversion prior to a filing in juvenile court.

- Nebraska has adopted the best practice of keeping youth aged ten and under out of the juvenile justice system, but additional work is being done at the community, county, and state level to determine the best response to these youth. This effort should be monitored to identify any legislative gaps and advocate for legislation to support response to this population. The Legislative Workgroup is committed to serving as a forum for sharing and discussing information and practices on this important issue. The group will continue to monitor this issue and advocate for legislative changes as necessary.
- The Graduated Response Grid created by the Administrative Office of Probation (AOP) reflects an important piece of legislative reform and allows Probation officers to respond in a flexible and individualized manner to the youth they serve. The group commends the AOP for undertaking this collaborative process.
- The Community Based Aid fund is essential for empowering communities and improving outcomes for youth. State level funding decisions should reflect that this fund is a priority.

In order to support legislative reform, the Legislative Workgroup will undertake the following steps:

- Track bills and report on content to stakeholders;
- Inform juvenile justice stakeholders of data and research;
- Provide data and policy research to assist the Legislature and its members;
- Provide input and resources to support legislation; and
- Coordinate legislative testimony to promote legislation that supports best practices in juvenile justice.
- Potential upcoming areas of priority may include access to counsel, community based aid, status petitions and 3(c) filings, JDAI priorities, redefining “staff secure,” sealing and expungement, graduated response, and youth under eleven.

Goal Number Two: Placement and Needs Mapping

Identify the placement needs of the juvenile justice population and the resources available to these youth throughout the state.

Stakeholders need comprehensive and timely data to solve the complex challenges facing children and families in the juvenile justice system. The analysis and visualization of data allows us to understand youth involved in the juvenile justice system, and how complex systems can work together to support these youth in reaching their full potential.

The Data Mapping and Analysis Taskforce has reconvened as the Placement and Needs Mapping Workgroup (Co-chairs Dr. Katherine Bass and Mike Fargen) to understand how the system operates, how youth move through placements, and what levels of care youth need in geographic areas. The group will work towards creating a tool that will allow decision makers to ensure communities have placements to serve youth close to home at the appropriate level of care.

In order to support this goal, the Placement and Needs Mapping Group will undertake the following action steps:

- Continue identifying the needs of the juvenile justice population and the resources available throughout the state.
- Understand the current capacity of the juvenile justice system's out-of-home placement continuum of care, including the locations and levels of care across the state.
- Understand the path that youth take through the juvenile justice system out-of-home placement continuum of care, including placement changes and changes in level of care.
- Create a needs assessment for decision makers to use in planning out-of-home services and placements location or capacity. This will support a juvenile justice system of care where youth with out-of-home placement needs are served in their communities at the least restrictive level of care necessary.
- Refresh data previously accessed to update project.
- Establish a validation process for data used for the tool.
- Communicate the types and locations of out-of-home placements, services, and levels of care are available in the state.

Goal Number Three: Evaluation and Assessment

Apply the highest standards of evaluation, assessment, and research in the social sciences to the understanding of existing needs of youth in Nebraska.

Assessment of youth allows stakeholders to determine the right level of intervention for youth in or at risk of entering the juvenile justice system. This prevents youth who are at low risk of recidivism from being drawn deeper into the system, and allows youth who are at high risk to access the level of care they need without failing out of less intense services. Once the risk level and intervention needs of the youth are identified, Nebraska must have a continuum of programs that are evaluated for their efficacy in the populations they serve. This allows the matching of the need to services in the community and state.

The Evaluation and Assessment Workgroup (Chairperson Dr. Richard Weiner) convened research professionals and juvenile justice stakeholders to make thoughtful recommendations to support a juvenile justice system where decisions are made based on assessment and services are provided by evidence based programs.

Recommendations

- The system wide categorization of Evidence based Practices in the University of Nebraska White Paper (Lincoln and Omaha – Wiener, Hobbs, and Spohn) has been adopted by the Juvenile Services Committee and the Nebraska Children's Commission. This white paper should be considered for adoption by juvenile justice agencies and organizations who require definitions for Evidence Based programming in Nebraska.

- A unified and shared database should be created for agencies that assess, serve, and treat youth across the state. This database could allow for enhanced case management, as well as prediction of needs across the state and individualized data outcomes for research.
- Systems should measure, track, and evaluate both recidivism and/or initial contact with the juvenile justice system.
- Current emphasis on programs and actions that prevent initial contact with the juvenile justice system should continue.
- The Juvenile Services Committee should collaborate with the System of Care Initiative to conduct a statewide study of existing assessment techniques that state and private agencies use with youth across the state of Nebraska.
- The Juvenile Services Committee and the Nebraska Children’s Commission should continue to support the work of the Placement and Needs Mapping Workgroup.
- The Court Improvement Project and the Evaluation and Assessment Workgroup should collaborate to ensure that judges, other legal professionals and other significant stakeholders receive education that communicates the value and importance of assessment, evaluation, and research to bring about successful youth and family outcomes.

Goal Number Four: Out-of-Home Placements and Transitions

Review and make recommendations related to best practices in the juvenile justice out-of-home continuum of care, including transition supports.

The juvenile justice continuum of care exists at many levels, from diversion through detention. It is the challenge of any juvenile justice system to ensure that it has the necessary resources, and that youth are connected to services without being over or underserved. Nebraska has undergone significant change, and has spent the past five years assessing and evaluating a system in flux. As the system stabilizes and reforms are implemented, the system has the opportunity to collaborate and create innovative solutions to the challenges youth in juvenile justice out-of-home placements face.

The Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center (YRTC) and Out of Home Placement Workgroup (Chairperson Nicole Brundo) along with the Juvenile Services Committee have identified recommendations related to the YRTCs. The group then reconvened as the Out-of-Home Placement and Transitions Workgroup to focus on the juvenile justice out-of-home continuum of care along with youth transitioning back to their communities.

YRTC Recommendations

- The YRTCs should remain open and serve their current high risk population.
- Data analysis related to the YRTCs will continue to identify best practices in serving this population and gaps in the service array. Data analysis should include:
 - Number of placements prior to and following placements at the YRTC;
 - Dually adjudicated youth;
 - Lifetime consumption of resources for youth who are placed in YRTCs.

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- The Legislature should fund the YRTCs at a level to meet the staffing requirements of the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA).
- The YRTCs are currently the only juvenile justice no eject, no reject facility in the State. This can result in youth who should be served elsewhere being admitted to the YRTC, including youth with severe mental health, developmental disability, or substance abuse needs. The Out of Home Placement and Transitions Workgroup (chaired By Vicky Thompson-Smith) will continue working towards systemic solutions to this important issue.

Goal Number Five: Cross-System Coordination

Identify areas of potential cross-system collaboration, and promote best practices to coordinate services and program.

Youth who are in or at risk of entering the juvenile justice system often have complex issues that require cross-system collaboration to address. To achieve the best outcomes, communities must have a comprehensive service array that meets the many needs of youth. Schools, communities, health care practitioners, and other stakeholders can work together to support youth and families to reach their full potential.

The Services Coordination Workgroup (chairperson Vicky Thompson-Smith) addressed these issues to create a report in 2016, and reviewed the report to affirm their recommendations for the 2017 year. In addition to the recommendations of this group, the Juvenile Services Committee and NCJJ serve as a forum for stakeholders to come together to openly discuss challenges, share information, and create innovative solutions. Collaboration and coordination between systems and agencies is an ongoing effort and these groups are dedicated to facilitating continued efforts.

Cross-System Efforts Recommendations

- Encourage widespread use of the Collective Impact Model. Collective Impact is a model that many community collaboratives in Nebraska use to improve identified outcomes in a community. These communities work closely together to gather data, implement programs, and connect families and children to needed resources and services. The shared nature of the Collective Impact model allows communities to address complex issues through developing a common agenda, establishing shared measurement of progress, coordinating efforts, encouraging continuous communication, all with a strong backbone organization to coordinate this work.
- State funded entities are encouraged to fund in a manner that boosts the use of the Collective Impact Model and encourages braided funding.
- Encourage the use of braided funding by creating a process to streamline or standardize reporting for grant funding.

- The State of Nebraska, in partnership with state and private entities that fund juvenile justice initiatives, should explore the use of blended funding. This collaborative process should identify necessary changes in legislation, policy, and funding requirements to support blended funding.
- Collaborate with the Children’s Commission and its Community Ownership of Child Well-being Workgroup to identify policy barriers that communities face in using the Collective Impact model and mainlining community collaboratives. Create recommendations to address or remove the barriers.
- Ensure that programs in communities match the workforce by utilizing the three process measures below:
 - The workforce is consulted to determine that implementation is possible and will not face significant or unknown barriers;
 - The program is in line with licensure requirements and billing practices;
 - Public and private stakeholders provide comments and feedback before implementation.
- Encourage the use of telehealth to increase access to services across the state.
- Incentivize professionals and service providers practicing in rural areas with increase payment, mileage, or other financial incentives to acquire training, certification, approval, and/or utilize certain payor services to serve youth with involvement or at-risk of involvement of the juvenile justice system.
- The Juvenile Services Committee will continue to provide input and collaborate with the B2i Advisory Committee on its recommendations regarding extending voluntary supports for youth aging out of the child welfare system to the juvenile justice population.
- Review the data related to service gaps and outcomes gathered as part of the System of Care to assess its ability to address the treatment and non-treatment needs of youth involved in the Nebraska Juvenile Justice system.

Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice Updates

The Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice (Coalition) was created in 2000 by LB1167 and codified at [Neb. Rev. Stat. §43-2411](#) as an advisory committee to the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice (Nebraska Crime Commission) to make recommendation on awarding of grants; identify juvenile justice issues, share information, and monitor and evaluate programs in the juvenile justice system; recommend guidelines and supervision procedures to be used to develop or expand local diversion programs for juveniles; and prepare an annual report including recommendations on administrative and legislative actions which would improve the juvenile justice system.

During this reporting period, the Coalition was required to comply with the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP Act) as the State Advisory Group (SAG) for Nebraska to be eligible for receiving the Title II federal juvenile grant. The purpose of Title II funds is to support creation of an overarching, developmentally appropriate, and trauma-informed framework for states to use to inform and connect youth justice work to development of individual and multi-agency, comprehensive state plans that support the well-being of all youth. Nebraska's eligibility for receiving Title II funding is determined by its compliance with the four core requirements of JJPD Act.

The Four Core Requirements are:

1. Removal of status and non-offenders from secure detention facilities;
2. Separation of adult and juvenile offenders throughout incarceration;
3. Removal of juveniles from adult jails and lockups, and
4. That state must collect and analyze data to identify and address any disproportionate numbers of minority youth at specific decision points throughout the juvenile justice system.

New federal regulations taking effect July 1, 2017 require any state receiving funds to have no violations of juvenile detainees being held in an adult facility. Any violations will result in a 40% reduction in federal grant and administrative funds from Title II. In the past year, we believe Nebraska had 3 violations. The increased requirements, along with decreased funding and administration does not make it feasible for the Nebraska Crime Commission to administer this grant going forward. Beginning July 1, 2017, the state of Nebraska is no longer seeking the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Title II Federal Juvenile grant.

When a state decides to not apply for the funds, a local government or nonprofit organization may apply for the funding as a “non-participating” entity. The non-participating entity must choose only one of the four core requirements to focus on. A government agency from Nebraska did apply for the funds, focusing on Disproportionate Minority Contact. The awarding of funds decision has not been made at the time of this report.

While the Coalition is no longer federally mandated due to the withdrawal from Title II funding, the Coalition remains active with five standing subcommittees who meet in addition to quarterly Coalition meetings: Executive, Grant Review, Disproportionate Minority Contact, Youth, Diversion, and Community Planning.

The goal of the Coalitions remains to improve all aspects of the juvenile justice system in the state of Nebraska by assisting communities and the state with the planning and implementation of systemic improvements, advocacy, education, and award recommendations of state funds for such purposes. It is hoped the lives and futures of children, youth, and families involved with the juvenile justice system will be improved.

Due to the desire to not duplicate efforts with other statewide commissions and coalitions, and to develop strong recommendations for juvenile justice in Nebraska, the Coalition has joined forces with the Children's Commission Office of Juvenile Services Committee to hold joint meetings and provide annual recommendations.

Diversion Subcommittee:

The Juvenile Diversion Subcommittee of the Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice is a working group established in 2013. The duties of the subcommittee, outlined in Nebraska Revised Statute §81-1427, include assisting in regular strategic planning related to supporting, funding, monitoring, and evaluating the effectiveness of plans and programs receiving funds from the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program.

The subcommittee will continue to focus on a training academy curriculum for diversion programs, and monitoring diversion programs for implementation of best practices.

For more information about juvenile diversion in Nebraska, please see the 2016 Annual Report [here](#).

Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Division

The Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Division is a separate and distinct budgetary program within the Nebraska Crime Commission. Funds under this program shall be used exclusively to assist aid recipients in the implementation and operation of programs or the provision of services identified in the aid recipient's comprehensive juvenile services plan, including programs for local planning and service coordination; screening, assessment, and evaluation; diversion; alternatives to detention; family support services; treatment services; truancy prevention and intervention programs; pilot projects approved by the Nebraska Crime Commission; payment of transportation costs to and from placements, evaluations, or services; personnel when the personnel are aligned with evidence-based treatment principles, programs, or practices; contracting with other state agencies or private organizations that provide evidence-based treatment or programs; pre-existing programs that are aligned with evidence-based practices or best practices; and other services that will positively impact youth and families in the juvenile justice system.

The Director of the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Division of the Nebraska Crime Commission is responsible for providing technical assistance and guidance for the development of comprehensive juvenile services plans; coordinating the review of the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program application and making recommendations for the distribution of funds; developing data collection and evaluation protocols, overseeing statewide data collection, and generating an annual report on the effectiveness of juvenile

services that receive funds; developing relationships and collaborating with juvenile justice system stakeholders, providing education and training as necessary, and serving on boards and committees when approved by the commission; assisting juvenile justice system stakeholders in developing policies and practices that are research-based or standardized and reliable and are implemented with fidelity and which have been researched and demonstrate positive outcomes; developing and coordinating a statewide working group as a subcommittee of the Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice to assist in regular strategic planning related to supporting, funding, monitoring, and evaluating the effectiveness of plans and programs receiving funds; and working with the coordinator of the Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice in facilitating their obligations specific to the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program. The Financial Grants Monitor is responsible for fiscally monitoring subgrantees, processing reimbursement contingent upon documentation, reviewing cash reports, processing cash requests, and the overall fiscal oversight of the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Division.

For more information about the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program, please see the Annual Report [here](#).

Community Planning Advisory Subcommittee

Pursuant to Nebraska Revised Statute § 43-2404.01, the Director of the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program shall develop and coordinate a statewide working group as a subcommittee of the coalition to assist in regular strategic planning related to supporting, funding, monitoring, and evaluating the effectiveness of plans and programs receiving funds from the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program. The working group was developed in 2013 and is comprised of approximately 14 individuals from across Nebraska. This statewide working group is referred to as the Community Planning Advisory Subcommittee of the Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice.

Juvenile Services Funds

Juvenile Services funds are state funds appropriated by the Nebraska Legislature and administered by the Nebraska Crime Commission. Availability of funds are announced on an annual basis and applications are accepted through a competitive grant process. The purpose of these funds, as outlined in state statute, are to provide the implementation of programs that are considered to be evidence based or working towards becoming evidence based. These funds provide program development and evaluation consultation for projects funded through Juvenile Services. A variety of projects are funded through juvenile services such as programs for assessment and evaluation, family support services, alternatives to detention, delinquency prevention, community centers, mentoring, substance abuse, school programs, prevention of delinquent behavior, diversion and to address Disproportionate Minority Contact.

For a listing of FY 2016 Juvenile Services programs please visit <https://ncc.nebraska.gov/sites/ncc.nebraska.gov/files/2016-Juvenile-Services-Listing.pdf>

APPENDIX A: MATRIX SUMMARY OF STRATEGIES

The Juvenile Services Committee has developed strategies to promote each of its five goals:

1. Promote legislative reform in line with best practices in juvenile justice.
2. Identify the placement needs of the juvenile justice population and the resources available to these youth throughout the state.
3. Apply the highest standards of evaluation, assessment, and research in the social sciences to the understanding existing needs of youth in Nebraska.
4. Review and make recommendations related to best practices in the juvenile justice out-of-home continuum of care, including transition supports.
5. Identify areas of potential cross-system collaboration, and promote best practices to coordinate services and programs.

This appendix includes the strategies groups by the corresponding goal number, with an indication of whether legislation is needed for the strategy and which goals the strategy supports.

PROMOTE LEGISLATIVE REFORM IN LINE WITH BEST PRACTICES IN JUVENILE JUSTICE.

Practical juvenile justice policy based on proven, evidence based interventions is essential for good outcomes for youth. Advances in juvenile justice practice must be supported by legislation and stakeholder buy-in. As juvenile justice reform continues in Nebraska, legislation is an important tool in improving outcomes for youth.

| LEGISLATIVE REFORM | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|------|
| Strategy | Legislation | Goal |
| Legislative reform should promote best practices related to juvenile justice. | Yes | 1 |
| Current juvenile justice legislation must be monitored to identify gaps that prevent adoption of best practices. | Need for Legislation Under Review | 1 |
| Legislation should support and promote compliance with the four core requirements of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. | Need for Legislation Under Review | 1 |
| Best practices in juvenile record sealing and expunging should be a priority in legislative reform to allow youth to thrive and reach their full potential. The Legislative Workgroup will continue to examine and promote best practices in sealing and expungement. | Need for Legislation Under Review | 1 |
| Change statutory language to require that all youth have legal counsel and appropriate adequate funding for that requirement. | Yes | 1 |
| Legislation should encourage diversion programs. Counties are encouraged to adopt the best practice of offering diversion prior to a filing in juvenile court. | Need for Legislation Under Review | 1 |
| Nebraska has adopted the best practice of keeping youth aged ten and under out of the juvenile justice system, but additional work is being done at the community, county, and state level to determine the best response to these youth. This effort should be monitored to identify any legislative gaps and advocate for legislation to support response to this population. | Need for Legislation Under Review | 1 |
| Support implementation of the Administrative Office of Probation's graduated response grid. The AOP has put significant work into this important piece of the juvenile justice system, and | No | 1 |

| LEGISLATIVE REFORM | | |
|--|--|------|
| Strategy | Legislation | Goal |
| the Juvenile Services Committee commends the AOP for the collaborative process. | | |
| The Community Based Aid fund is essential for empowering communities and improving outcomes for youth. State level funding decisions should reflect that this fund is a priority. | Yes | 1,5 |
| <p>In order to support legislative reform, the Legislative Workgroup will undertake the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track bills and report on content to stakeholders; • Inform juvenile justice stakeholders of data and research; • Provide data and policy research to assist the Legislature and its members; • Provide input and resources to support legislation; and • Coordinate legislative testimony to promote legislation that supports best practices in juvenile justice. • Potential upcoming areas of priority may include access to counsel, community based aid, status petitions and 3(c) filings, JDAI priorities, redefining “staff secure,” sealing and expungement, graduated response, and youth under eleven. | Need for Legislation Under Review | 1 |

IDENTIFY THE PLACEMENT NEEDS OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE POPULATION AND THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THESE YOUTH THROUGHOUT THE STATE.

Data is essential to solving the complex challenges that youth and families in the juvenile justice system face. The analysis and visualization of data allows us to understand the youth who become involved in the juvenile justice system, and how complex systems can work together to support these youth in reaching their full potential.

| PLACEMENT AND NEEDS MAPPING | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|-------|
| Strategies | Legislation | Goal |
| Continue identifying the needs of the juvenile justice population and the resources available throughout the state. | Need for Legislation Under Review | 2,3,4 |
| Understand the current capacity of the juvenile justice system’s out-of-home placement continuum of care, including the locations and levels of care across the state. | Need for Legislation Under Review | 2,3,4 |
| Understand the path that youth take through the juvenile justice system out-of-home placement continuum of care, including placement changes and changes in level of care. | Need for Legislation Under Review | 2,3,4 |
| Create a needs assessment for decision makers to use in planning out-of-home services and placements location or capacity. This will support a juvenile justice system of care where youth with out-of-home placement needs are served in their communities at the least restrictive level of care necessary. | Need for Legislation Under Review | 2,3,4 |
| Refresh data previously accessed to update project. | No | 2,3,4 |
| Establish a validation process for data used for the tool. | Need for Legislation Under Review | 2,3,4 |
| Communicate the types and locations of out-of-home placements, services, and levels of care are available in the state. | Need for Legislation Under Review | 2,3,4 |

APPLY THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF EVALUATION, ASSESSMENT, AND RESEARCH IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES TO THE UNDERSTANDING OF EXISTING NEEDS OF YOUTH IN NEBRASKA.

Assessment of youth allows stakeholders to determine the right level of intervention for youth in or at risk of entering the juvenile justice system. This ensures that youth who are at low risk of recidivism are not drawn deeper into the juvenile justice system, and that youth who are at high risk can access the level of care they need without failing out of less intense services. Once the risk level and intervention needs of the youth are identified, Nebraska must have a continuum of programs that are evaluated for their efficacy in the populations they serve. This allows the matching of the need to services in the community and state.

| EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|-------|
| Strategy | Legislation | Goal |
| The Court Improvement Project and the Evaluation and Assessment Workgroup should collaborate to ensure that judges, other legal professionals and other significant stakeholders receive education that communicates the value and importance of assessment, evaluation, and research to bring about successful youth and family outcomes. | No | 2,3,4 |
| The system wide categorization of Evidence based Practices in the University of Nebraska White Paper (Lincoln and Omaha – Wiener, Hobbs, and Spohn) has been adopted by the Juvenile Services Committee and the Nebraska Children’s Commission. This white paper should be considered for adoption by juvenile justice agencies and organizations who require definitions for Evidence Based programming in Nebraska. | No | 2,3,4 |
| A Unified and shared database should be created for agencies that assess, serve, and treat youth across the state. This database could allow for enhanced case management, as well as prediction of needs across the state and individualized data outcomes for research. | Yes | 2,3,4 |
| Systems should measure, track, and evaluate both recidivism and/or initial contact with the juvenile justice system. | Need for Legislation Under Review | 2,3,4 |
| Current emphasis on programs and actions that prevent initial contact with the juvenile justice system should continue. | No | 3,4 |
| The Juvenile Services Committee should collaborate with the System of Care Initiative to conduct a statewide study of existing | No | 2,3,4 |

| EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT | | |
|--|-------------|-------|
| Strategy | Legislation | Goal |
| assessment techniques that state and private agencies use with youth across the state of Nebraska. | | |
| The Juvenile Services Committee and the Nebraska Children’s Commission should continue to support the work of the Placement and Needs Mapping Workgroup. | No | 2,3,4 |

REVIEW AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO BEST PRACTICES IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE OUT-OF-HOME CONTINUUM OF CARE, INCLUDING TRANSITION SUPPORTS.

The juvenile justice continuum of care exists at many levels, from diversion through detention. It is the challenge of any juvenile justice system to ensure that it has the necessary resources, and that youth are connected to services without being over or underserved. Nebraska has undergone significant change, and has spent the past five years assessing and evaluating a system in flux. As the system stabilizes and reforms are implemented, the system has the opportunity to collaborate and create innovative solutions to the challenges youth in juvenile justice out-of-home placements face.

| OUT OF HOME PLACEMENTS AND TRANSITIONS | | |
|---|-------------|-------|
| Strategy | Legislation | Goal |
| The YRTCs should remain open and serve their current high risk population. | No | 4 |
| Data analysis related to the YRTCs will continue to identify best practices in serving this population and gaps in the service array | No | 2,3,4 |
| The Legislature should fund the YRTCs at a level to meet the staffing requirements of the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA). | Yes | 4 |
| The YRTCs are currently the only juvenile justice no eject, no reject facility in the State. This can result in youth who should be served elsewhere being admitted to the YRTC, including youth with severe mental health, developmental disability, or substance abuse needs. The Out of Home Placement and Transitions Workgroup (chaired By Vicky Thompson-Smith) will continue working towards systemic solutions to this important issue. | No | 4 |

**IDENTIFY AREAS OF POTENTIAL CROSS-SYSTEM COLLABORATION,
AND PROMOTE BEST PRACTICES TO COORDINATE SERVICES AND
PROGRAMS**

Youth who are in or at risk of entering the juvenile justice system often have complex issues that require cross-system collaboration to address. To achieve the best outcomes, communities must have a comprehensive service array that meets the many needs of youth. Schools, communities, health care practitioners, and other stakeholders can work together to support youth and families to reach their full potential.

| CROSS SYSTEM COORDINATION | | |
|---|---|------|
| Strategy | Legislation | Goal |
| Encourage widespread use of the Collective Impact Model. Collective Impact is a model that many community collaboratives in Nebraska use to improve identified outcomes in a community. These communities work closely together to gather data, implement programs, and connect families and children to needed resources and services. The shared nature of the Collective Impact model allows communities to address complex issues through developing a common agenda, establishing shared measurement of progress, coordinating efforts, encouraging continuous communication, all with a strong backbone organization to coordinate this work. | Need for Legislation Under Review | 5 |
| State funded entities are encouraged to fund in a manner that boosts the use of the Collective Impact Model and encourages braided funding. | Need for Legislation Under Review | 5 |
| Encourage the use of braided funding by creating a process to streamline or standardize reporting for grant funding. | Need for Legislation Under Review | 5 |
| •The State of Nebraska, in partnership with state and private entities that fund juvenile justice initiatives, should explore the use of blended funding. This collaborative process should identify necessary changes in legislation, policy, and funding requirements to support blended funding. | Need for Legislation Under Review | 5 |
| Collaborate with the Children’s Commission and its Community Ownership of Child Well-being Workgroup to identify policy barriers that communities face in using the Collective Impact model and mainlining community collaboratives. Create recommendations to address or remove the barriers. | Need for Legislation Under Review | 5 |

| CROSS SYSTEM COORDINATION | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|-------|
| Strategy | Legislation | Goal |
| <p>Ensure that programs in communities match the workforce by utilizing the three process measures below:</p> <p>a. The workforce is consulted to determine that implementation is possible and will not face significant or unknown barriers;</p> <p>b. The program is in line with licensure requirements and billing practices;</p> <p>c. Public and private stakeholders provide comments and feedback before implementation.</p> | Need for Legislation Under Review | 3,5 |
| <p>Encourage the use of telehealth to increase access to services across the state.</p> | Need for Legislation Under Review | 5 |
| <p>The Juvenile Services Committee will continue to provide input and collaborate with the B2i Advisory Committee on its recommendations regarding extending voluntary supports for youth aging out of the child welfare system to the juvenile justice population.</p> | Legislation Needed for Extension | 5 |
| <p>Review the data related to service gaps and outcomes gathered as part of the System of Care to assess its ability to address the treatment and non-treatment needs of youth involved in the Nebraska Juvenile Justice system.</p> | No | 3,4,5 |
| <p>Encourage state funded entities to fund in a manner that boosts the use of the Collective Impact Model.</p> | Need for Legislation Under Review | 5 |

APPENDIX B: JUVENILE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

| Member Name | Member Type | Title and Organization |
|--------------------------|-------------|---|
| Jim Bennett | Voting | Director Of Juvenile Placement , Administrative Office of Probation, Juvenile Services Division |
| Cassy Blakely | Voting | Assistant Vice President of Youth Policy , Nebraska Children and Families Foundation |
| Nicole Brundo (Co-Chair) | Voting | Deputy County Attorney, Division Lead , Douglas County Attorney's Office, Juvenile Division |
| Judge Larry Gendler | Voting | Judge of the Separate Juvenile Court , Sarpy County Juvenile Court |
| Kim Hawekotte (Co-Chair) | Voting | Executive Director , Foster Care Review Office |
| Dr. Anne Hobbs | Voting | Director , Juvenile Justice Institute |
| Nick Juliano | Voting | Senior Director, Community Impact , Boys Town |
| Cynthia Kennedy | Voting | Community-Based Juvenile Services Aid Program Administrator , Nebraska Crime Commission |
| Mark LaBouchardiere | Voting | Juvenile Services Administrator , DHHS, Division of Children and Family Services, Office of Juvenile Services |
| Tom McBride | Voting | Executive Director , Nebraska Juvenile Justice Association |
| Kari Rumbaugh | Voting | OJS Committee, TFC Workgroup, Workforce Workgroup , Administrative Office of Probation, Juvenile Services Division |
| Dan Scarborough | Voting | Geneva YRTC Facility Administrator , DHHS, Division of Children and Family Services, Office of Juvenile Services |
| Juliet Summers | Voting | Policy Coordinator for Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice , Voices for Children in Nebraska |
| Vicky Thompson Smith | Voting | Program Manager , CEDARS Youth Services |
| Dr. Richard Wiener | Voting | Beddey Professor of Psychology , University of Nebraska, Lincoln |
| Dr. Ken Zoucha | Voting | Medical Services Director , DHHS, Division Behavioral Health |

| Member Name | Member Type | Title and Organization |
|---------------------------|-------------|--|
| Nicole Berggren | Resource | Program Manager , DHHS, Division of Children and Family Services, Office of Juvenile Services |
| Michele Borg | Resource | Education of Systems-Involved Students (ESIS) Coordinator , Nebraska Department of Education |
| Barb Fitzgerald | Resource | Program Coordinator , LPS - Yankee Hill Program |
| Tamara Gavin | Resource | Deputy Director , DHHS, Division of Behavioral Health |
| Catherine Gekas Steeby | Resource | Administrator , DHHS, Division of Medicaid & Long-Term Care |
| Christine Henningsen | Resource | Nebraska Youth Advocates Director , UNL, Center on Children, Family and the Law |
| Liz Hruska | Resource | President , Nebraska Legislative Fiscal Office |
| Monica Miles-Steffens | Resource | Director Of Juvenile Placement , Administrative Office of Probation, Juvenile Services Division |
| Jerall Moreland | Resource | Assistant Ombudsman , Ombudsman's Office |
| Lisa Neeman | Resource | Administrator II, Health Services Delivery Systems , DHHS, Medicaid and Long-Term Care |
| Sen. Patty Pansing Brooks | Resource | Senator , Nebraska Legislative Council, District 28 |
| Judge Linda Porter | Resource | Judge of the Separate Juvenile Court , Lancaster County Juvenile Court |
| Julie Rogers | Resource | Inspector General , Office of Inspector General of Nebraska Child Welfare |
| Julie Smith | Resource | Juvenile Justice Programs Specialist , Administrative Office of Probation, Juvenile Services Division |
| Deb VanDyke-Ries | Resource | Director , Nebraska Court Improvement Project |
| Rico Zavala | Resource | Juvenile Justice Service Director , CEDARS Youth Services |

APPENDIX C: NEBRASKA COALITION FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE MEMBERSHIP

| Member Name | Member Type | Title and Organization | Representation |
|-----------------------------|-------------|---|--|
| Mark Benne | Voting | Administrator , Northeast Nebraska Juvenile Services, Inc. | director or his or her designee from a staff secure youth confinement facility |
| Cassy Blakely (Chair) | Voting | Assistant Vice President of Youth Policy , Nebraska Children and Families Foundation | Additional Member |
| James (Jim) Blue | Voting | President & CEO , CEDARS Youth Services | community-based, private nonprofit organizations who work with juvenile offenders and their families in District 1 |
| Neleigh Boyer | Voting | Attorney , DHHS, Division of Legal Services | chief executive officer of the Department of Health and Human Services or his or her designee |
| Darrell Fisher | Voting | Executive Director , Nebraska Crime Commission | executive director of the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice or his or her designee |
| Tiffany Gressley | Voting | Prevention System Coordinator , Region 3 Behavioral Health Services | person who works directly with juveniles who have learning or emotional difficulties or are abused or neglected |
| Brian Halstead | Voting | Deputy Commissioner , Department of Education | Commissioner of Education or his or her designee |
| Kim Hawekotte | Voting | Executive Director , Foster Care Review Office | executive director of the Foster Care Review Office |
| Denise Kracl | Voting | Colfax County Attorney , Colfax County | county attorney |
| Mark LaBouchardiere | Voting | Juvenile Services Administrator , DHHS, Division of Children and Family Services | Administrator of the Office of Juvenile Services |
| Brett Matthies | Voting | Rapid Response Professional Partner , Region 6 Behavioral Healthcare | member of a regional behavioral health authority established under section 71-808 |
| Elaine Menzel (Vice Chair) | Voting | Legal Counsel , Nebraska Association of County Officials | Executive Director of the Nebraska Association of County Officials or his or her designee |
| Daniel Scarborough | Voting | Facility Administrator , Geneva Youth Rehabilitation Treatment Center | director or his or her designee from a youth rehabilitation and treatment center |
| Michelle (Shelli) Schindler | Voting | Facility Director , Lancaster County Youth Services Center | member of the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice |
| Amanda Speichert | Voting | Attorney , Lincoln County | public defender |
| Kevin Spencer | Voting | Chief of Police , Scottsbluff Police Department | police chief |
| Vacant | Voting | , | community-based, private nonprofit organizations who work with juvenile offenders and their families in District 2 |

| Member Name | Member Type | Title and Organization | Representation |
|----------------------|-------------|---|--|
| Vacant | Voting | , | community-based, private nonprofit organizations who work with juvenile offenders and their families in District 3 |
| Vacant | Voting | , | county commissioner or supervisor |
| Vacant | Voting | , | director or his or her designee from a secure juvenile detention facility |
| Vacant | Voting | , | member under twenty-four years of age when appointed |
| Vacant | Voting | , | member under twenty-four years of age when appointed |
| Vacant | Voting | , | member under twenty-four years of age when appointed |
| Vacant | Voting | , | member under twenty-four years of age when appointed |
| Vacant | Voting | , | person who works with an alternative to a detention program for juveniles |
| Vacant | Voting | , | person with data analysis experience |
| Vacant | Voting | , | representative of mental health professionals who works directly with juveniles |
| Vacant | Voting | , | sheriff |
| Vacant | Voting | , | volunteer who works with juvenile offenders or potential juvenile offenders |
| Corben Waldron | Voting | Young Adult Representative , Lancaster | member under twenty-four years of age when appointed |
| Jeanne Brandner | Non-Voting | Deputy Probation Administrator , Administrative Office of Probation, Juvenile Services Division | probation administrator of the Office of Probation Administration or his or her designee |
| Judge Vernon Daniels | Non-Voting | Judge of the Separate Juvenile Court , Douglas County | separate juvenile court judge |
| Judge Randin Roland | Non-Voting | County Judge , Cheyenne County | county court judge |

APPENDIX D: JUVENILE SERVICES COMMITTEE STATUTORY AUTHORITY

Juvenile Services Committee Statute Neb. Rev. Stat. 43-4203(b)

The commission shall create a committee to examine the Office of Juvenile Services and the Juvenile Services Division of the Office of Probation Administration.

Such committee shall review the role and effectiveness of out-of-home placements utilized in the juvenile justice system, including the youth rehabilitation and treatment centers, and make recommendations to the commission on the juvenile justice continuum of care, including what populations should be served in out-of-home placements and what treatment services should be provided at the centers in order to appropriately serve those populations.

Such committee shall also review how mental and behavioral health services are provided to juveniles in residential placements and the need for such services throughout Nebraska and make recommendations to the commission relating to those systems of care in the juvenile justice system.

The committee shall collaborate with the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Juvenile Justice Institute, the University of Nebraska Medical Center, Center for Health Policy, the behavioral health regions as established in section 71-807, and state and national juvenile justice experts to develop recommendations.

The recommendations shall include a plan to implement a continuum of care in the juvenile justice system to meet the needs of Nebraska families, including specific recommendations for the rehabilitation and treatment model.

The recommendations shall be delivered to the commission and electronically to the Judiciary Committee of the Legislature annually by December 1.