FY21 Q4

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

QUARTERLY TRANSFORMATION REPORT

DIRECTOR
Heidi Mueller

GOVERNOR
JB Pritzker

DIRECTOR UPDATES

- First Year Recap
- Next Year Projections

July 31, 2021, marked one full year since the announcement of the 21st Century Illinois Transformation Model. In the past year, IDJJ held conversations across the state with justice-involved youth and their families, DJJ staff, juvenile judges, juvenile defenders, juvenile detention centers, probation departments, and community leaders to share the plan and gather feedback. Stakeholders from each respective group formed the Advancing Transformation Committee to produce recommendations to improve the 21st Century Illinois Transformation Model.

One of the most memorable conversations we hosted was an internal Lunch & Learn with DJJ staff and Clinton Lacey, the former Director of the District of Columbia Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS). Clinton is a renowned leader in the juvenile justice space and generously shared with us about the system-wide transformations that he oversaw.

He described the evolution of the juvenile justice field, its transition from the Punitive Era to the Reform Era, and the need to move into the Transformative Era--a healing-centered and community-driven commitment to restorative justice. He noted that the Reform Era made changes that were kinder and more rehabilitative for children but did not address unresolved issues and even increased racial and ethnic disparities.

His work and words resonate with IDJJ as we move into a new Transformative Era. In the year since our announcement, the work to reduce the harm of incarceration and make the juvenile justice system less racist and more restorative for youth, families, and their communities is only beginning. We hope you will continue to follow our progress and join us in our efforts to achieve meaningful transformation for the youth served by our Department.

POSITIVE OUTCOMES

In August 2021, **IYC Warrenville's reception program was awarded the Barbara Allen-Hagen award by Performance-based Standards (PbS)**, a nationwide federally funded program for juvenile justice agencies. PbS is a system used to enter and analyze facility data relating to conditions and services provided, DJJ has participated in the data collection since 2008.

In addition to providing data analysis, PbS also helps facilities create benchmarks for success using its nationwide data as a standard. Facilities are encouraged to increase performance in particular areas of their facility depending on the data through the use of Facility Improvement Plans (FIP).

The Barbara Allen-Hagen award is given to facilities that have shown the most improvement after implementing a FIP and a demonstrated commitment to treating youth as their own. IYC Warrenville's reception unit was lauded for their progress on "Perceptions of Staff Safety." When the FIP was created in 2009, 47% of staff feared for their safety. Through introducing staff training, alternatives to confinement, wellness programs for staff, increased programming for youth, among other initiatives, the staff's sense of safety increased. In the most recent data collection, only 10% of staff reported fearing for their safety in IYC Warrenville reception. Warrenville also exhibited a strong focus on building caring and supportive relationships with youth, contributing to a reduction in fear and improvements in performance.

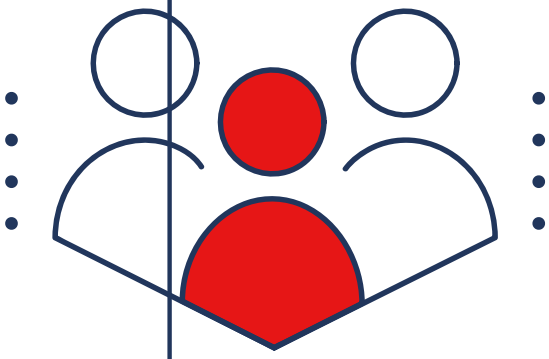
Congratulations to IYC Warrenville on their accomplishment!

POSITIVE OUTCOMES

DJJ was recently selected as a "Promising Practice Site" through the Council of Juvenile Justice Administrators (CJJA) for its work in reducing confinement.

DJJ implements many strategies to minimize the use and duration of confinement, including 1) increasing staffing ratios; 2) concurrently developing, retooling, and enhancing behavior management and discipline systems, as well as its mental health and behavioral interventions; 3) training and retraining staff on new approaches, as well as crisis intervention and de-escalation techniques; 4) implementing intensive documentation requirements; and 5) consistently monitoring, following up, and debriefing with staff.

As a Promising Practice Site, DJJ will guide other jurisdictions undergoing a similar reform to reduce confinement. Over the next two years, the Department will host up to 4 jurisdictions which will tour facilities, talk to staff, and learn how DJJ has significantly reduced the use and duration of confinement.



COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISION

DJJ's Community Services Division has developed a partnership with **National Youth Advocate Program (NYAP)** to provide community-based services to youth in Central Illinois. NYAP is a private, non-profit service provider for youth and families that provides over 66 types of services in ten states. Through this partnership, NAP will provide services to youth in Champaign, Macon, Peoria, and Vermillion counties.

The NYAP partnership brings their signature Contact and Never-ending Improvement (CANEI) program to youth residing in Central Illinois and enables DJJ to offer a continuum of support to youth and families in the region--before, during, and after release from a DJJ commitment.

CANEI is a 26-week, strength-based treatment program that facilitates life skill development and fosters compassion and empathy with others. Through intensive home and community-based services, group-based sessions, life skills training, and completion of a service-learning project, CANEI youth transform themselves by cultivating a sense of self, purpose, and responsibility. The CANEI program also includes access to emergency, licensed foster care services, and family stabilization.

Youth will be connected to programs offering community service opportunities and will receive holistic supports and services, including individual and family psychotherapy, mentoring, case management, and education and vocational support.

DJJ is excited to engage in this partnership with NYAP as part of our expanding Community Services Division.

TRANSFORMATION UPDATE

Over the past several months, DJJ partnered with the **Justice Equity and Opportunity Initiative** and the **Civic Consulting Alliance** to convene stakeholders, justice-involved youth and families, staff, system partners, community partners, service providers, advocates, and experts, to form the **Advancing Transformation Committee.** It was important to DJJ to hear from a variety of stakeholders, especially those with lived experience, who have different perspectives about the Department's transformation and what success could look like.

Nearly 50 Committee Members and Co-chairs met regularly to discuss how DJJ can better support youth, families, communities, and staff through the Plan for Transformation. Members discussed each stage of the IDJJ process (entry, stay, Aftercare, and discharge) and came up with dozens of recommendations to help develop an improved continuum of supports and services for the youth, families, and communities served by the Department.

The recommendations of the committed will be compiled into a final report and presented to IDJJ. The Department is grateful to have an engaged group of stakeholders committed to ensuring that the 21st Century Transformation Model is successful.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Governor Pritzker Signs Legislation Advancing Equity, Reducing Mandatory Minimums in Juvenile Justice Systems

Procedural Justice for Youth Act Outlaws Use of Isolation as Punishment at IDJJ Facilities

SPRINGFIELD-- Governor JB Pritzker signed the Procedural Justice for Youth Act today, making several changes to reforming the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice's operations and policies to reduce inequities, advance equity, reduce mandatory minimums, and ensure that youth receive necessary treatment and rehabilitation so they can have a timely return to the community. end the use of isolation and room confinement as punishment for youth.

"An initiative of our Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice is continuing its transformational work to build a system that nurtures our young people, supports their growth, and fosters a successful return to a welcoming community," said Governor JB Pritzker. "I'm proud to sign the Procedural Justice for Youth Act into law to advance this critical mission as we leave the punitive models of the past behind and reimagine our juvenile justice system. help ensure justice is truly at the center of our juvenile justice system," said Governor JB Pritzker. "I want to thank IDJJ Director Heidi Mueller for her leadership and the sponsoring lawmakers Sen. Connor and Rep. Slaughter for passing this vital legislation."

"We are grateful to Governor Pritzker for continuing to support IDJJ's 21st Century Transformation Model and helping move Illinois toward a juvenile justice system that is truly just," said Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice Director Heidi Mueller. "By signing the Procedural Justice for Youth Act into law, Governor Pritzker is ensuring better equity in sentencing for young people, promoting procedural justice, and making sure more youth have opportunities to participate in the treatment, education, and programming that can help them turn their lives around."

"House Bill 3513 helps to bring our juvenile justice system into the 21st century by utilizing evidence-based practices for juveniles that are proven to provide better outcomes down the line," said State Senator John Connor (D-Lockport). "As best practices get updated, we need to update the law to reflect those changes."

"The Procedural Justice for Youth Act enhances procedural fairness for youth in the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice (IDJJ), and helps the department improve its services and operations," said State Representative Justin Slaughter (D-Chicago). "This initiative is very important to IDJJ, as it continues to implement evidence-based programs and services."

House Bill 3513 enhances procedural justice by removing mandatory penalties that create longer sentences for younger teens than for older youth who commit the same offenses. Youth labeled as Habitual Juvenile Offenders or Violent Offenders will no longer be committed until age 21, but instead will receive a proportionate 12-month extension to their stay at IDJJ. The bill also clarifies concurrent sentencing, so that calculating sentences is done uniformly for youth across the state.

In addition to promoting procedural justice in commitments of youth to IDJJ, House Bill 3513 also makes operational changes that allow IDJJ to align with national practice standards and the Department's mission. The bill prohibits IDJJ from using isolation or room confinement as a punishment in response to youth behavior, in line with the Department's consent decree and national standards for juvenile facilities.

The bill takes effect immediately.

JUVENILE JUSTICE HEADLINES

The work at IDJJ is a part of a sea change in the larger juvenile justice landscape.

Below is a snapshot of juvenile justice headlines from across the country.

NJ to try 'Restorative Justice' approach on juvenile in 4 cities

Can we reimagine juvenile justice for Gen Z?

'This could've saved my life': Exoneree grateful for new Illinois law

17 year-olds are no longer considered adults through the Missouri Court System

Michigan Supreme Court limits use of restraints on juveniles