



# utah department of human services

The mission of the Division of Juvenile Justice Services is to be a leader in the field of juvenile justice by changing young lives, supporting families and keeping communities safe.

D I V I S I O N   G O A L S		
 <p>Improve short-term and long-term outcomes for our youths</p>	 <p>Support families in the rehabilitation process</p>	 <p>Improve the safety, security and morale of JJS youths and employees</p>
R E L A T E D   A C T I V I T I E S		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence-based treatment models &amp; more clinicians</li> <li>Cognitive-based interventions</li> <li>Integration of technology into programming</li> <li>Performance-based contracts and continuum of care</li> <li>Career readiness, college courses, vocations and certificate programs</li> <li>Competitive sports and art enrichment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early mental health and substance abuse screening and release planning</li> <li>In-Home O&amp;A</li> <li>Child &amp; Family Team Meetings</li> <li>Family Councils and facility newsletters</li> <li>In-Home family support and parenting programs</li> <li>Strengthening Families community courses</li> <li>Crisis counseling</li> <li>Respite care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting basic physical and behavioral health needs</li> <li>Trauma-informed search policy</li> <li>LGBTQI policy and training</li> <li>Case manager certification in evidence-based practices</li> <li>Integrated crisis response training and de-escalation techniques</li> <li>Performance-based standards in all detention and secure facilities</li> <li>Procedural Justice approach</li> </ul>

P o p u l a t i o n   C h a n g e s F Y 1 3   t o   F Y 1 5			
<b>I N C R E A S E S</b>	<b>FY13</b>	<b>FY15</b>	<b>%</b>
Receiving Centers	2,843	3,249	12%
Youth Services Shelter	184	221	17%
Work Camp	213	223	5%
<b>D E C R E A S E S</b>	<b>FY13</b>	<b>FY16</b>	<b>%</b>
Detention	8,489	7,161	16%
O&A	576	549	5%
Community Based	510	350	31%
Secure Care = No Change			

Recent Structural Changes
Genesis Work Program moved to Salt Lake Valley Detention, redesigned for moderate and high-risk youths owing significant restitution.
16-bed Farmington Bay Observation & Assessment program closed. In-home O&A expanded from Salt Lake to Ogden.
Girl's long-term secure unit moved to Farmington Bay.
Detention release plans to incorporate MAYSI-2 results.

# JJS System Analysis and Response to Legislative Audit and Council of State Governments Justice Center’s Report

## OVERALL ASSESSMENT: HIGH RATES OF RECIDIVISM

Recidivism rates for JJS youths have averaged over 50 percent since 2010.

### CHALLENGE: REDUCTIONS IN FUNDING HAVE AFFECTED PROGRAMS

FINDINGS	JJS RESPONSE
<p>Federal funding has decreased significantly (about 15 percent) since 2009. This loss of funding has resulted in limits in programming availability.</p>	<p>JJS has restructured its residential treatment programming to offer short, medium and longer-term placements based on a youth’s risk and needs. More services are planned in the home during placement and during transition to the community. This restructuring is designed to offer more placement options and maximize limited dollars.</p>
<p>A by-product of funding decreases has been an increase in recidivism.</p>	<p>A significant funding gap still exists, however. There are limited evidence-based programs in the community for use as alternatives to residential placements. As a result, youths are not able to obtain treatment services unless they are removed from their home and placed in the custody of JJS.</p>

### CHALLENGE: PROGRAMS FAIL TO USE EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES AND LACK ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES

FINDINGS	JJS RESPONSE
<p>Lack of program monitoring and not properly targeting high-risk youth offenders are possible contributors to the recidivism rate.</p>	<p>JJS has rebid its residential contracts, which will become effective January 2016. Providers will be required to implement evidence-based interventions, identify risk levels of eligible youths and criminogenic needs being addressed, report on treatment goals, and have quality assurance protocols in place.</p>
<p>Private provider contracts do not include specific requirements to report on youth outcomes.</p>	

### CHALLENGE: OVERUSE OF DETENTION FOR NON-FELONY CRIMES

FINDINGS	JJS RESPONSE
<p>A risk screening tool is not used to help guide detention decisions. Admission is based solely on the number and type of charges and/or judicial discretion.</p>	<p>JJS is currently evaluating various detention risk assessment tools for potential application and validation for Utah’s population. Youth Services and Receiving Centers are offered as an alternative to detention. JJS’ SUCCESS measure is aimed at reducing detention utilization and lengths of stay when other alternatives exist.</p>

Detention is also used as a post-disposition sanction despite no research on its effectiveness and its significant expense.

Changes to detention practices must be done in collaboration with the Juvenile Court.

### **CHALLENGE: EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS LACK FOCUS ON YOUTH'S KEY NEEDS REQUIRED FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICE MATCHING**

#### **FINDINGS**

Programs should target high-risk youths and tailor programming to address negative behavior factors.

#### **JJS RESPONSE**

Early Intervention Programs have modified programming to align with the youth's level of risk, so that higher-risk youths receive more intensive services. Work Camp eligibility criteria was modified to focus on moderate and higher-risk youths. The program will still accept lower risk youths who owe high amounts of restitution, but referrals are discouraged if restitution can be earned through Juvenile Court work crews.

### **CHALLENGE: LENGTHS OF STAY LACK CRITERIA**

#### **FINDINGS**

Lengths of stay for JJS custody youths are not based on time needed for effective treatment and efficient use of resources.

Lengths of stay in community residential placements are based largely on service provider discretion, and most providers do not have clearly defined "dosage" of services need for effective treatment to guide length of stay and release decisions.

Stays in secure facilities are determined by the Youth Parole Authority based on the seriousness of the youth's offenses along with subjective ratings of progress, influenced by youth behavior and attitude. In 69% of placements, Youth Parole Authority guidelines were exceeded. The actual length of stay exceed guidelines by an average of 95 days.

#### **JJS RESPONSE**

The rebid residential contracts now require dosage targets and objective completion criteria. The contracts will be effective January 2016.

The Youth Parole Authority recently adopted new lengths of stay guidelines, incorporating findings from a University of Utah study on lengths of stay. Objective behavioral ratings were also adopted to ensure uniform application among all five long-term secure facilities. The six month review process was changed to 90-days, increasing frequency of reviews.

### **CHALLENGE: YOUTH'S TREATMENT NEEDS NOT EFFECTIVELY ASSESSED**

#### **FINDINGS**

Youth may receive a mental health screening but that information is not routinely shared with the Court.

Unless a youth is placed in the 45-day Observation and Assessment (O&A) program, a

#### **JJS RESPONSE**

For the last two years, JJS has been administering the MAYSI-2 screening tool at all Youth Services and Receiving Centers, detention centers, and early intervention programs. The tool measures a youth's functioning in multiple areas, including mental health and substance abuse. JJS is in the

youth’s mental health and substance use treatment needs may not be fully known before placement. O&A, however, cost an average of \$11,925 per youth, 60 times more than the cost of an in-depth validated assessment in the community.

process of creating a note entry into the CARE juvenile information system to input MAYSI-2 results so the court can view that information.

For the past two years, JJS has been offering an in-home alternative to residential O&A in Salt Lake County. The program has since expanded to the Ogden area and allows youths to remain home under JJS supervision while comprehensive assessments are completed, with findings reported to the court. JJS has plans to phase out residential O&A by 2018 and expand in-home O&A statewide.

JJS expanded its clinical department by cancelling contracts with providers and instead hiring in-house clinicians. The clinical team is currently evaluating all assessment instruments in use to standardized the process and ensure validated tools are in use. Clinicians, however, are limited in their ability to address behavioral health needs that require medications. JJS is in need of an individual with this expertise and the required licensure and credentials.

**CHALLENGE: STAFF LACK SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE TO EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENT EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES**

**FINDINGS**

Most staff are not trained in risk, need, and responsivity and the use of JJS’ Case Planning Tool, which limits the effective use of assessment results for case planning purposes.

**JJS RESPONSE**

By June 30, 2016 all JJS Case Manager will be certified in evidence-based practices and the use of the Case Planning Tool. Certification involves training, examination and observation. All JJS staff in other program functions are being trained on the Case Planning Tool and how to apply the risk-need-responsivity concepts to their program functions.

**CHALLENGE: LACK OF EVIDENCE BASED TREATMENT MODELS**

**FINDINGS**

There lacks defined, evidence-based program models for use in secure facilities and contracted community placements.

There are limited evidence-based programs available in the community for use as alternatives to residential placement and to support successful reentry.

**JJS RESPONSE**

JJS researched and adopted several evidence-based curricula such as Thinking for a Change, Why Try and Seeking Safety to use in secure facilities.

JJS modified its contract with the University of Utah Social Research Institute to expand the use of the CPC. Incorporated CPC elements in Quality

There is limited application of the Correctional Program Checklist to assess service quality.

Programs also lack vocational training and certification programs.

Assurance audits. A full-time researcher was also hired to provide technical assistance to programs to improve outcomes.

Through a grant from the Utah State Office of Education, JJS is now able to offer vocational training and certification programs in secure facilities. A Graduate Program is also provided to youths who have graduated from high school, but remain in secure facilities. The program provides access to college courses as well as vocational training and certificates.

### **CHALLENGE: DATA NOT BEING USED TO DRIVE DECISION MAKING**

#### **FINDINGS**

There is capacity to conduct robust data analysis but JJS is not regularly tracking recidivism by risk level or other key youth characteristics or system interventions.

There is limited use of data to develop structured decision making tools to guide supervision, residential placement and length of stay decisions. There are limited formal processes to identify and regularly review key agency or service provider outcomes and to use this data for planning and performance improvement.

#### **JJS RESPONSE**

JJS is currently working with the Pew Foundation and the National Center on Juvenile Justice to develop standardized and robust recidivism measure tools. JJS is also an active member of the Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrator's Recidivism Committee and the JJS Director chairs this committee.

JJS administration has multiple data dashboards to guide decision making and inform strategic planning. For example, one dashboard measures risk levels and criminogenic needs of youths to determine appropriate placements. While JJS has no control over who is ordered into JJS custody, efforts are made to ensure the best placement matching.

The Department of Human Services is developing data dashboards to collect and report on process and outcome measures.

### **CHALLENGE: JJS AND JUVENILE COURT COLLABORATION NEEDED**

#### **FINDINGS**

There is lack of ongoing effort to develop agreed-upon criteria that can reduce the use of detention for lower risk youth.

Both parties need to better identify youth's treatment needs to make informed decisions but have not partnered to explore opportunities to work together to do so pre-disposition.

#### **JJS RESPONSE**

JJS is researching a detention risk assessment tool, and has offered Youth Services and Receiving Centers as an alternative to detention.

For the last two years, JJS has been administering the MAYSI-2 screening tools at all Youth Services and Receiving Centers, detention centers, and early intervention programs. The tool measures a youth's functioning in multiple areas, including

Lack of coordination to ensure services are used efficiently to target youth at-risk of a probation violation and JJS custody.

Lack of collaboration on shared need for intensive, evidence-based services to keep higher risk youth in the community.

The Juvenile Court and JJS lack a graduated response policy, and technical violations are a significant driver of JJS residential placements/services.

mental health and substance abuse. JJS is in the process of creating a note entry into the CARE juvenile information system to input MAYSI-2 results so the court can view that information. There are limited evidence-based programs available in the community for use as alternatives to residential placements. As a result, youths are not able to access treatment services unless they are removed from their home and placed in the custody of JJS.

JJS has worked with the Juvenile Court to draft a technical violations matrix. The matrix is currently under review and awaiting approval by the Board of Juvenile Court Judges.

## **CHALLENGE: LIMITED AVAILABILITY OF MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES**

### **FINDINGS**

Medicaid funding is essential to access services. However, there is limited Medicaid eligibility for evidence-based community services, and few behavioral health services are available in rural areas. Youth don't receive timely or effective assessments and treatment

### **JJS RESPONSE**

The behavioral health needs of court-involved youths could be better served in the community if the resources existed. Instead, youths are ordered into JJS custody in order to access treatment. JJS has restructured programs to reduce lengths of stay and transitions youths home with services. A better solution would require funding community treatment services.