

Lancaster County Juvenile Services Comprehensive Plan

July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2021



Lancaster County Board of Commissioners

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Copy of this plan can be found at <http://lancaster.ne.gov/hserv/juvenile/compplan.htm>

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JDAI Collaborative Member List

Executive Summary

Lancaster County has been setting goals and objectives for juvenile justice since 1998. We continue to plan because the nature of youth and the philosophy used to address their behavior are constantly changing. We have implemented a graduated sanctions program, collected and analyzed volumes of data, and built a state of the art detention facility. Yet a disproportionate number of minority youth continue to be in the system; youth with truancies and incidents of youth running away are a constant struggle; and the issues of substance abuse, mental health and poverty continue to permeate families of the youth we serve.

In 2015, Lancaster County developed a three year plan with five key priorities:

- Utilize multi-disciplinary collaboration with the schools to partner in preventing juvenile justice system involvement;
- Prevent the onset and reoccurrence of youth entering the juvenile justice system or committing future offenses;
- Reduce the racial and ethnic disparity of youth in the juvenile justice system;
- Ensure service availability for all youth and their families; and
- Infuse Restorative Justice throughout every system point.

We discovered that oftentimes, constraints and issues made successful completion of objectives addressing these priorities challenging. However, due to the dedicated collaborative efforts of many and commitment from our funding partners, we made significant contributions towards those identified priorities.

In 2018, Lancaster County's JDAI Collaborative convened a subcommittee to update the Juvenile Services Comprehensive Plan. Each of the identified priorities is listed below.

- Priority 1:** Ensure equitable treatment of our system-involved youth.
- Priority 2:** Provide effective services and apply best practices to prevent youth from entering the juvenile justice system.
- Priority 3:** Facilitate respectful and accommodating treatment of all families and youth in the juvenile justice system.
- Priority 4:** Ensure behavioral health services are accessible to all youth and their families.
- Priority 5:** Ensure all juvenile justice system stakeholders are using evidence-based principles to meet the needs of our youthful population.

The underlining mission of Lancaster County's Juvenile Justice System is:

"To provide individualized supervision, care, and treatment in a manner consistent with public safety to those youth under age 18 at the time of referral who violate the law. Further, the Juvenile Justice System shall recognize and encourage prevention efforts through the support of programs and services designed to meet the needs of those youth who are identified as being at-risk or violating the law and those whose behavior is such that they endanger themselves or others".

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Community Team

In 1980, Lancaster County formed a Justice Council to discuss and plan for adult and juvenile justice issues. This included top department head representation from all departments within the adult and juvenile criminal justice systems. Key committees included: Juvenile Justice Review Committee (JJRC); Alcohol Advisory Committee; Alternatives to Incarceration; and Domestic Violence Coalition.

In 2000, a proposal was made to establish the Criminal Justice System as a separate department, but debate brought up questions regarding the appropriateness of juvenile and adult system issues being together. As a result, the Justice Council was dissolved. The focus of juvenile justice planning and services remained under the Human Services Administration.

Over the next several years, those at the table addressing justice issues were expanded to include Lincoln Public Schools, mental health and substance abuse agencies, youth organizations, juvenile justice professionals, cultural centers, UNL, and elected officials. This group of advocates was known as the JJRC-Juvenile Justice Review Committee.

In 2017, Lancaster County officially signed on as a Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) site. As a result, the JJRC was renamed to what we now call the JDAI Collaborative. Additionally, during this year, the adult criminal justice system revived the Justice Council to focus on adults.



Today active teams guide and oversee the efforts of the identified priorities. They include: Truancy Team, Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities Committee, and Steering Committee. Each of these teams meets monthly to address priority goals. The JDAI Collaborative and associated sub-committees will guide the community over the next 3 years (2018-2021) as we strive to meet our plan's priorities. The Lincoln/Lancaster County Human Services Office serves as the backbone organization for these planning efforts.



Beginning in early 2018, the JDAI Collaborative members were asked to participate in a sub-committee to work on the Lancaster County Juvenile Services Comprehensive Plan. The individuals listed on the previous pages volunteered to be part of this process.

This planning committee participated in half day planning retreats on January 17, April 9, and June 4, 2018. This included a review of the current year plan, review of community data elements, and prioritizing goals and strategies for the next 3 years.

Once the plan was put into written format, it was sent to all JDAI Collaborative members, Lancaster County Commissioners, and Lancaster County Juvenile Court Judges for review.

Juvenile Justice System Key Reports

Throughout this planning period, Lancaster County has invested time and resources in several different evaluations to ensure services provided to our youth are grounded in research. Below is a summary of these evaluations:

Nebraska Juvenile Justice Institute - Evidence-Based Nebraska

Lancaster County is in full compliance with Nebraska Revised Statute Chapter 43 Section 2404.02, which states “Any program funded through the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program that served juveniles shall report data on the individual youth served. . . data collected shall include, but not be limited to, the following: The type of juvenile service, how the service met the goals of the comprehensive juvenile services plan, demographic information on the juveniles served, program outcomes, the total number of juveniles served, and the number of juveniles who completed the program or intervention.” This information is submitted through a database administered through the Nebraska Crime Commission. The data is then examined and evaluated by the Juvenile Justice Institute. Since this process started, Lancaster County Human Services only has access to programs directly administered through the Human Services Office and relies on the Juvenile Justice Institute to provide quality assurance on all programs funded through Community Based Aid.



Nebraska Juvenile Diversion Programs 2012-2015

During the 2012-2015 time period, Lancaster County successfully discharged 69% of youth from diversion (77% NE avg.), 14% of youth failed to comply with diversion (14.6% NE avg.), and 11% had a new law violation (5.3% NE avg.). Recidivism consisted of misdemeanor and felony cases entered in JUSTICE (cases filed in court – not including traffic, or less serious offenses). The NE average recidivism rate was 30.2% for youth who successfully discharged from diversion and 61.1% for youth who did not successfully complete diversion. Lancaster County’s Diversion program had a 36% recidivism rate for youth who successfully discharged and 57% recidivism rate for youth who did not successfully complete diversion.

In 2016, Lancaster County restructured the diversion program. For the time period of July 1, 2016 through April 30, 2018 the following was reported:

Lancaster County successfully discharged 78% youth, 8% of youth failed to comply with diversion, and 6% had a new law violation. Recidivism consisted of any law enforcement contact, with the exception of traffic. During this time period, there was a 16% recidivism rate for youth who successfully discharged and 31% recidivism rate for youth who did not successfully complete diversion.



Nebraska Truancy and Absenteeism Programs 2015 to 2016

The Lancaster County Truancy Diversion Program is administered at Park, Culler, & Goodrich Middle Schools and Lincoln High, North Star, Northeast, & Southeast High Schools. The Juvenile Justice Institute reports 27.1% of youth in the program are successful (completed program requirements). However, an analysis completed by the Center on Children, Family and the Law determined youth were successful 56% of the time. According to the report completed by JJI, the average number of days youth spent in the program were 47 (32.5 Days NE avg.). A subsequent evaluation is currently being completed by the Center on Children, Family and the Law.



Nebraska Alternative to Detention Programs 2015 to 2016

There are 3 detention alternatives funded through Community Aid in Lancaster County. These are: 1. Reporting Centers; 2.

Shelter, and 3. Pre-Adjudicated Community Services Program. The purpose of detention alternatives is to keep youth from entering detention. This report found 76% of the youth in reporting centers and shelter (reported together) would have otherwise been in detention and 77% of youth in the Pre-Adjudicated Community Services programs would have been in detention if not for these programs. 2.2% of youth in shelter and reporting center and 3.3% of youth in the Pre-Adjudicated Community Services Program received a new law violation while being supervised (10.4% NE avg.). 73.1% of youth in shelter (66.8% NE avg.), 71.3% in reporting centers, and 65% of youth in Pre-Adjudication Community Services were successfully discharged (61.25% NE avg.). The average amount of time youth spent on the electronic monitor was 45.95 days (54.95 days NE avg.). Length of stay in shelter was 42.75 days (46.25 days NE avg.). Length of stay in reporting center is 20 days (no NE avg.).

Nebraska Level Youth Gang Membership Risk Factors in Lincoln Public Schools – Center on Children, Families and the Law

Operation Tipping Point began in Fall 2015. The police department gang unit now has a civilian working full-time with his primary role defined as reaching out to youth who display high risk of joining a gang. The Center on Children, Family and the Law developed an objective screening instrument for use with this population. Additionally, the Center on Children, Family and the Law identified risk and protective factors that put youth in Lincoln at greater risk of joining gangs. Partnerships with the Lincoln Public Schools have formed as a result of this information.



Project Restore Evaluation – Center on Children, Families and the Law

Project Restore is a program designed and implemented by the Lancaster County Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities Committee. It is an early intervention/diversion program to prevent youth from unnecessarily entering the juvenile justice system with an effort to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the system. Analysis of Lincoln racial and ethnic juvenile justice data indicated the juvenile justice system entry from offenses originating within schools is a point at which disparities are visible in the data for assaults and disturbing the peace. The original target group for this program was 8th through 10th grade; however, an initial evaluation indicated minority youth were being inadvertently screened out due to prior offenses. As a result, the program was expanded to target younger youth in 7th grade.

A recent evaluation of Project Restore included data from inception of the program in November 2015 through December 2017. Once 7th grade was added, it was determined there was no significant difference in program participation by minority youth. Assaults represented 64% of offenses and 36% of the offenses were disturbing the peace.

One of the key components of Project Restore is the timely process of youth accessing services. 39% of all referrals are received by the County Attorney's Office,

reviewed, and sent to Project Restore the same day, with 95% of all incidents completing this process within a week. 57% of contacts with families are completed the same day the referral is received by the County Attorney's Office. Finally, the average number of days from the offense to the first meeting with the family is 9 days.

As far as program success, 86% of youth successfully complete the program. The average number of days to complete the program are 55 days from the date of offense. 71% of youth completing the program had no subsequent offenses investigated by LPD compared to 52% of youth who were not eligible or chose not to participate in the program. 53% of youth completing the program had no subsequent LPS suspensions compared to 40% of non-participants.



Early Assessment Program

During a site visit by the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), it was recommended the Early Assessment Program be considered for an evidence based program. A subsequent evaluation was completed by the Juvenile Justice Institute. OJJDP suggested several changes in the methodologies used completing the evaluation, prior to them considering it for

an evidence based program. Specifically, the need for a randomized control study was at the center of OJJDP's concern. The Center on Children, Family and the Law is currently working on completing another evaluation of this program.



Robert F. Kennedy Foundation National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice

Beginning in May 2017 and concluding in April 2018, the Robert F. Kennedy National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice completed an analytic probation system evaluation that included relevant stakeholders. Some of the recommendations specific to the community collaborative include: Adolescent Development and Graduated Responses (once rolled out) training for stakeholders; expanded shelter and detention alternatives to use with the graduated response system for youth on probation with technical violations; and increased family engagement. There was special recognition of everyone's efforts in ensuring the right youth are served with the right level of service as close to the offense as possible; thereby, diverting youth who violate both the criminal and truancy laws.



Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative

In September 2017, Lancaster County became a Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) site. Since that time, the community collaborative (formerly the Juvenile Justice Review Committee) has been renamed the JDAI Collaborative. Lancaster County juvenile justice stakeholders and a few community stakeholders were interviewed and detention data is currently being analyzed. At the time of this report, we are awaiting the final essay and Detention Utilization Summary from JDAI.



Community Description

Lancaster County is made up of 22 cities, towns and villages in Southeast Nebraska, and comprises the state’s second largest metropolitan area, with 309,637 residents in the County. From 2005 to 2015, Lincoln’s non-White population had increased 87%, while the White-alone population increased only 13%. (Lincoln Vital Signs).

Economics

The median income for a household in the County is about \$67,500. Lincoln’s cost of living is 10% below the national average. Since 2005, there has been a 45% increase in the number of persons below the poverty threshold. Almost 65% of those in poverty are working.

Rates of poverty for Whites have held steady at about 13% since 2009 and have been the lowest of all races/ethnicities. The rate of poverty among Blacks/African-Americans has dropped from 60% to 32%, but is still the highest rate of poverty among other races/ethnicities in Lincoln.

In the past decade, the average cost of child care increased 29%. In 2015, the annual cost of care in a child care center for any child younger than school-age was more than resident tuition and fees at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

The annual cost of child care, for a child, is 11% of the median family income of a typical married couple and 36% of the median income of single mothers (Lincoln Vital Signs).

Transportation Routes

Lancaster County has several transportation routes that run through the County. These include Highway 77 North and South, Highway 2, ‘O’ Street and Interstate 80 East and West. Interstate 80 is one of the two most heavily traveled transcontinental

highways in the United States. On an average non-summer day, more than 16,000 vehicles drive on Interstate 80. In the summer and on weekends, the daily average surges to more than 25,000 (Nebraska Department of Roads). Interstate 80 is also one of the most commonly used transportation routes to transport illegal drugs (Nebraska State Patrol).



The City of Lincoln also has a bus system with 19 different bus routes. These routes incorporate most of the city. The buses run from 5:40a.m. to 9:50 p.m. Monday through Saturday. The city offers low income, month long bus passes for people in need.

Population

Lancaster County is a vibrant and growing community with youth ages 10 to 17 comprising almost 10% of the total population. The following chart is an outline of the demographics of the youth population:

Data Points	Total Population	Juvenile Population (10-17)
Total Population	309,637	30,537
Male	155,107	15,642
Female	154,530	14,931
White	275,564	26,129
Black/African American	15,528	2,298
Asian	15,246	1,689
Native American	3,299	457
Hispanic	21,198	3,237
Non-Hispanic	288,439	27,336

**OJJDP Website

Schools

In Lincoln there are 39 public elementary schools, 12 middle schools, and 6 high schools. There are 4 alternative schools for students who have difficulty learning in a regular setting and 4 focus schools that let students choose to focus on a specific subject area or skill set during high school. There are approximately 25 private schools. Four school districts are located outside of the Lincoln metropolitan area (Lincoln Public Schools).



There are four main colleges in Lincoln. The largest is the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. Attendance for this college alone was 20,833 undergraduates in 2017. There is one trade school. There are five colleges and universities with satellite locations in Lincoln. With these colleges, Lancaster County residents have the opportunity to attend college in their home area. These colleges also have a positive financial impact on the community as well as an endless number of student volunteers for agencies to utilize.

However, with the colleges there comes a considerable amount of underage drinking, parties, and crimes associated with them. There are over 100 liquor licenses within a one-mile radius of the UNL campus. Nebraska also ranks in the top 20 percent of states in underage and binge drinking.

Attractions

Lincoln is the Capitol of Nebraska. Lincoln is also home to Memorial Stadium, where Nebraska football games are played. Approximately 90,000 people per game attend these football games on a regular

basis. Lincoln is also home to several museums and a zoo.

With the recent addition of Pinnacle Bank Arena to our community, we've seen a steady growth in the downtown area. Pinnacle Bank Arena plans to host over 125 events per year that brings in over 700,000 people annually.

The Lied Center is a venue for national tours of Broadway productions, concert music, and guest lectures. Pinewood Bowl also offers a variety of events in an amphitheater. The Lancaster Event Center hosted 320 events in 2017 with over 500,000 people in attendance.

Lincoln has 2 shopping malls and several plazas. All of these attractions are a positive financial resource for Lancaster County; however, they also bring an increase in alcohol consumption, drug usage and overall crime.

Lancaster County has 5 different lakes for boating and/or camping. It is also home to Star City Shores and a number of city pools and parks. These provide for pro-social activities for youth and their families to enjoy.



Lancaster County has an excellent reputation and history of working collaboratively, and services for youth are clearly a priority. Over the past twenty years, all of the major governmental and child-serving agencies have joined forces to focus on juvenile issues. The JDAI Collaborative and its' task forces are excellent examples of such collaboration.

Priority Areas

1. *Ensure equitable treatment of our system-involved youth.*
2. *Provide effective services and apply best practices to prevent youth from entering the juvenile justice system.*
3. *Facilitate respectful and accommodating treatment of all families and youth in the juvenile justice system.*
4. *Ensure behavioral health services are accessible to all youth and their families.*
5. *Ensure all juvenile justice system stakeholders are using evidence-based principles to meet the needs of our youthful population.*

Please note: Priorities are NOT numbered by importance

Priority One: *Ensure equitable treatment of our system-involved youth.*

Reducing the disproportionate minority contact in the juvenile justice system is a priority from the current year’s plan. Lancaster County is fortunate to have an active Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities (RED) Committee that meets regularly, reviews juvenile justice data, and takes direct action to meet this priority. This committee was able to accomplish the following during 2015-2018:

- 18 juvenile justice documents were translated into Arabic, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese.
- Common definition for each system point.
- Project Restore (created in partnership with the Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparity Program through Georgetown University) was evaluated and modified to include younger youth. This program was highlighted during a keynote presentation at the National Conference on DMC.
- The enrollment rate for minority youth in diversion is higher than the enrollment rate of white youth.
- Lancaster County partnered with the Nebraska Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative.



However, despite these efforts, there continues to be a disproportionate number of minority youth in the juvenile justice system. The chart below reflects the Relative Rate Index for each system point. To be considered equal, all system points should equal 1.

Arrest	2.5
Juvenile Court	1.1
Diversion	1.1
Secure Detention	1.2
Petitioned	1
Delinquent Findings	1
Probation	.9
Juvenile Facility	1.3

In 2016, 43% of all arrests were minority youth, while they account for only 25% of the population. Overall arrests have decreased by 26% since 2010. The RED Committee learned from Georgetown that when efforts are made to reduce numbers at a system point, the disproportionality usually increases as overall numbers decrease.

Lancaster County continues to focus efforts on reducing the number of minority youth in the juvenile justice system.

Reporting Period **Jan / 2016**
through **Dec / 2016**

System Points:	Total Youth	White	Black or African-American	Hispanic or Latino	Asian	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders	American Indian or Alaska Native	Other/ Two or More Races	All Minorities	Percentage of Minority
1. Population at risk (age 10 through 17)	30,573	27,336	2,298	3,237	1,689	0	457	0	7,681	25%
2. Juvenile Arrests	2,471	1,410	545	310	55	0	101	50	1,061	43%
3. Refer to Juvenile Court	1,165	623	277	151	26	0	49	39	542	47%
4. Cases Diverted	725	374	136	95	13	1	22	84	351	48%
5. Cases Involving Secure Detention	549	258	156	80	20	0	24	11	291	53%
6. Cases Petitioned (Charge Filed)	587	306	138	85	20	0	21	17	281	48%
7. Cases Resulting in Delinquent Findings	428	230	101	58	15	0	14	10	198	46%
8. Cases resulting in Probation Placement	353	202	57	56	7	0	20	11	151	43%
9. Cases Resulting in Confinement in Secure Juvenile Correctional Facilities	52	21	16	12	1	0	2	0	31	60%
10. Cases Transferred to Adult Court	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	100%

Priority One: Ensure equitable treatment of our system-involved youth.

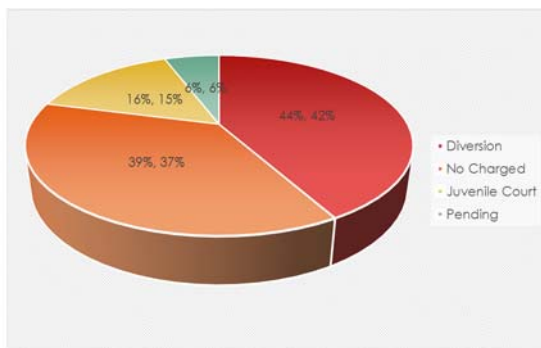
Strategies/Objectives	Action Steps	Responsible Party	Time Line	Resources Needed	Expected Results
Increase cultural awareness and competencies	Training on Implicit Bias & other related trainings for all stakeholders	RED Committee	July 1, 2019	Funding	Stakeholders and community members will have a better understanding of implicit bias and how it impacts decisions
	Promote and support diversity of JJ system staff and/or volunteers	All Stakeholders	June 30, 2021	Collaboration	Diverse workforce
	Work with media on messaging of minority youth	RED Committee	June 30, 2021	Collaboration	Diversity will be celebrated in our community through positive media coverage of all youth
Work collaboratively with partners to reduce racial and ethnic disparities of youth in the juvenile justice system at all levels	Collect and analyze data (including survey of clients)	All Stakeholders	June 30, 2021	Funding	Determine disproportionality and disparity
	Work with JDAI on system point analyses & research	Juvenile Justice Stakeholders	June 30, 2021	Collaboration	Ensure polices and/or practices aren't contributing to disparities
	Identify and implement evidence based practices/programs to address disproportionality	All Stakeholders	June 30, 2021	Funding	Effective programs and policies
Increase Community Cohesiveness	Engage community stakeholders	Juvenile Justice Stakeholders	June 30, 2021	Training & Collaboration	Welcoming community for everyone

Priority Two: *Provide effective services and apply best practices to prevent youth from entering the juvenile justice system.*

This is a current priority for Lancaster County. Lancaster County has several programs and processes in place to prevent youth from entering the juvenile justice system. The Early Assessment Process was developed from a Juvenile Justice System Analysis of Lancaster County. The number of youth assessed through this process over the course of the last four years are:

2014	2015	2016	2017
591	752	666	741

The chart below illustrates the outcomes of youth after completing the assessment process. As shown, only 16% of youth assessed result in court involvement.

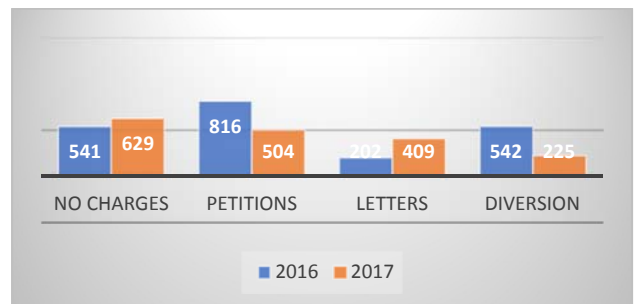


During last year’s plan, the diversion program was redesigned. Key changes and outcomes are:

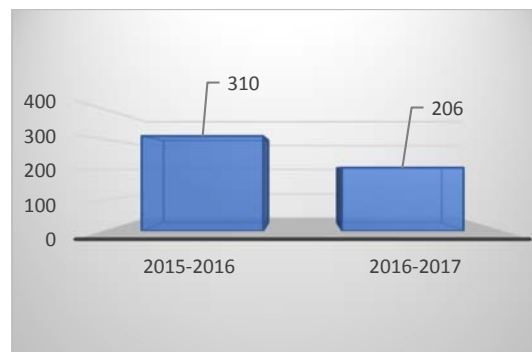
- Diversion fee reduced by 50%;
- Enrollment rate increased by 50%;
- Minority youth enrollment increased by approximately 50%;
- Number of days in diversion decreased by 40 days;
- Successful discharges increased by over 10%;
- On average, it takes 14 days from the date of referral to the date the youth signs their diversion plan; and

- Unsuccessful discharges decreased by 14%.

Overall, the number of youth being diverted out of the juvenile justice system has increased dramatically as illustrated in the chart below:



Not only are youth who violated the law being diverted from the juvenile justice system at an increased rate, this is also true for youth referred for truancies. In fact, 2016 experienced the lowest number of truancy filings since 2006.



Additionally, Lancaster County partners with a multitude of agencies for preventative and diversion programming. In 2014, these agencies united to create Operation Tipping Point. Gangs are established in Lincoln, with 35 local gangs and an influence from an additional 30 documented gangs in the surrounding jurisdiction. Lincoln currently has 765 documented gang members and 478 gang associates and is collectively working to curtail gang membership.

Priority 2: Provide effective services and apply best practices to prevent youth from entering the juvenile justice system.

Strategies/Objectives	Action Steps	Responsible Party	Time Line	Resources Needed	Expected Results
Provide effective prevention and early diversion strategies	Provide and promote diverse activities for youth	All Stakeholders	June 30, 2020	Collaboration & Funding	Youth will be involved in pro-social activities
	Enhance collaboration with existing service providers	Juvenile Justice Coordinator	June 30, 2020	Collaboration	Decrease in youth entering the juvenile justice system
	Infuse Restorative practices	The Mediation Center, Lighthouse, & LPS	June 30, 2019	Collaboration & Funding	Youth will learn to repair the harm caused by their actions
	Enhance cultural services	All Stakeholders	June 30, 2019	Funding	Cultural friendly services available to all youth
	Collaborate with law enforcement and schools to develop training and preventative measures	All Stakeholders	June 30, 2019	Collaboration	Youth will have positive supports in place to help them achieve their educational goals
	Match youth with positive mentors	HBBBS & TeamMates	June 30, 2020	Funding	Youth will have role models

Increase school attendance and graduation rate through a combined effort	Continue and evaluate the Truancy Diversion Program	Juvenile Justice Coordinator, LPS, and County Attorney	June 30, 2021	Collaboration & Funding	Improved attendance, performance, and school attachment
	Engage parents	All Stakeholders	June 30, 2020	Collaboration	Family voice in all decisions
	Support early truancy interventions	All Stakeholders	June 30, 2019	Collaboration	Increased graduation rate

Priority Three: *Facilitate respectful and accommodating treatment of all families and youth in the juvenile justice system.*

While this is a new priority in our plan, family engagement has always been an underlying priority in all system work. Lancaster County began this year’s plan with planning team members creating a word cloud of what they perceive to be the biggest gaps in the system. The figure below illustrates gaps centered around the treatment of both youth and families.



In an attempt to gather input from consumers, the following questions were asked of both youth and parents from community partners through a written survey or focus group:

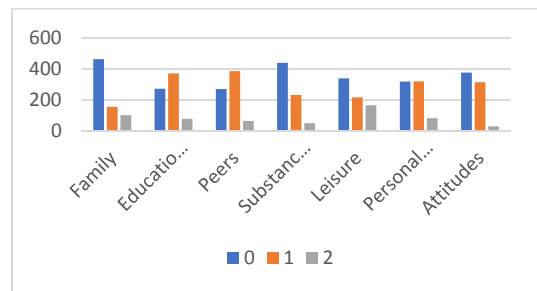
1. As a resident of Lancaster County, I/child want to have the following opportunities:
2. If I/child were to get in trouble at school, I/child want to be redirected and helped in this manner:
3. If I/child were to have contact with the police, this is how I want the process to look:
4. My greatest need now is:

Youth and families indicated they wanted to be contacted immediately, if redirection was needed from law enforcement or schools. However, they

stressed they wanted to be contacted in a respectful and sensitive manner by someone who understands them. They asked to be spoken to in a language they understood by someone who was familiar to them, if possible. Families also indicated they wanted a system that was family friendly. They wanted a system that recognized families couldn’t always get off work to attend things in the middle of the day.

When families answered the question concerning opportunities, they said they wanted education and more low cost or free pro-social activities. This desire for activities was statistically significant when controlling for race.

Engaging youth in prosocial activities that strengthen protective factors is a need with youth who are entering the juvenile justice system. Nebraska Youth Screen scores collected at the time of assessment indicate leisure time is the highest identified risk factor:



Programs that invest in pro-social activities engaging high risk youth with law enforcement have been an integral part of our prevention and early intervention services for the last several years.

Priority 3: Facilitate respectful and accommodating treatment of all families and youth in the juvenile justice system.

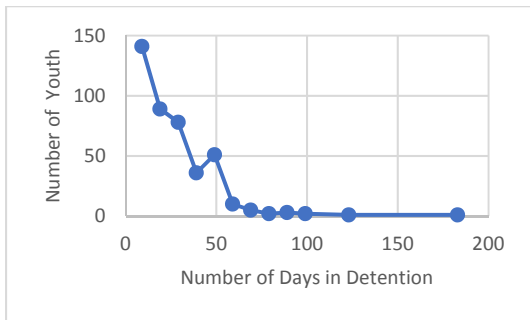
Strategies/Objectives	Action Steps	Responsible Party	Time Line	Resources Needed	Expected Results
Build relationships between law enforcement and the youth in our community and break down stereotypes they have of each other	Promote and evaluate the 5-0 Club and Shields Unite	Juvenile Justice Coordinator	June 30, 2019	Funding	Youth and law enforcement will have a better understanding of each other and celebrate differences between them
	Training through Youth Strategies on policing the youth brain and juvenile justice jeopardy for youth	Juvenile Justice Coordinator, LPD, & LPS	June 30, 2019	Funding	Law enforcement and youth will learn more about each other
Provide an effective and sensitive response that exhibits a holistic approach to the youth, family and system organization involved	Encourage services that meet families during the time and places that work for them	All Stakeholders	June 30, 2021	Collaboration	Families will be more readily available to access services
	Conduct focus groups with families to gain better understanding of needs/wants	All Stakeholders	June 30, 2020	Collaboration	System created by families for families

Assist families with services and identification of supports necessary to prevent entry or reentry into the system	Ask families how they want to be engaged	All Stakeholders	June 30, 2019	Collaboration	Family voice will be heard
	Family partners will reflect the diversity of families served	All Stakeholders	June 30, 2020	Collaboration	Families will be more comfortable working with advocates
	Restorative practices will be utilized	The Mediation Center, Lighthouse, & LPS	June 30, 2020	Collaborations	Families will effectively address conflict resolution through restorative practices
	Market community resources	JDAI Collaborative	June 30, 2019	Resources	Community resources will be easy for families to find
	Family will have peer available to provide information to them	Youth Crisis Response Coalition	June 30, 2020	Funding	Families will be able to get information needed immediately

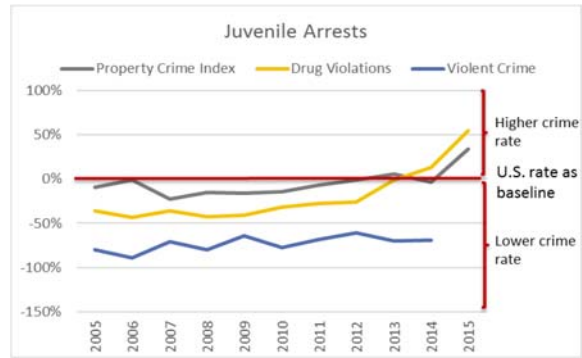
Priority Four: *Ensure behavioral health services are accessible to all youth and their families.*

Lancaster County is fortunate to have a Youth Crisis Response Coalition that meets monthly to focus on behavioral health. The crisis response system for youth began in 2017. The crisis line now averages around 20 phone calls per month. The crisis response team is contacted by police weekly. Crisis respite has approximately 5 youth monthly in shelter.

During the current year's plan, there has been a decrease in the number of youth in detention. However, youth remain in detention for an extended period waiting for an unsecured placement. The figure below illustrates the number of days youth remained in detention in 2016.



Ensuring youth also have services to assist in substance abuse issues is a priority. According to Lincoln Vital Signs, while Lincoln's juvenile drug arrest rate has typically been lower than the national rate, it is now 55% higher than the national rate. However, youth report through the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, they are using less marijuana (18% decrease) and alcohol (48% decrease).



Lancaster County partners with Lincoln Public Schools to provide behavioral health services for youth while at school to ensure limited resources are not a barrier for youth to access needed services. The number of children in poverty increased by approximately 2% over the last 5 years. Minority children are more likely to live in poverty than white children (Lincoln Vital Signs).



Lincoln has the highest number of Yazidis in our community (estimated 3,000). Lincoln Public Schools reports approximately 100 different languages spoken by approximately 3,300 students. The top 5 languages are Spanish, Arabic, Kurdish, Karen, and Vietnamese. We know immigrant and refugee children experience a different kind of trauma than youth raised in America. In an attempt to ensure trauma informed care is available for all children, we have partnered in 'Better Together' forums and trainings to build the bridge for better access and availability of this resource.

Priority 4: Ensure behavioral health services are accessible to all youth and their families.

Strategies/Objectives	Action Steps	Responsible Party	Time Line	Resources Needed	Expected Results
Trauma informed mental health treatment will be available for all youth	Support increase of EBP trainings for providers	Community Stakeholders	June 30, 2019	Funding	Providers will use EBP in providing trauma informed care to youth
	Train stakeholders on trauma	All Stakeholders	June 30, 2019	Funding	Juvenile justice stakeholders will use a trauma informed approach when working with youth
	Trauma screening & assessments	Community Stakeholders	June 30, 2019	Resources	Stakeholders will conduct trauma screenings and assessments
	Training on refugee trauma	Community Stakeholders	June 30, 2019	Funding	Providers will provide culturally appropriate services to refugees who have experienced trauma
Ensure a continuum of behavioral health programs	Develop and support crisis respite	Youth Crisis Response Coalition	June 30, 2019	Funding	Families will have crisis respite when needed
	Identify gaps in the current system and develop and implement resources as needed	JDAI Collaborative	June 30, 2019	Funding & collaboration	Families will have services when needed

Ensure the safety and stability of youth reentering the community	Collaborate with schools and behavioral health providers to triage youth in crisis and provide follow-up services to those youth	Youth Crisis Response Coalition	June 30, 2020	Collaboration & Funding	Youth will have appropriate services in place when needed
	Ensure aftercare is provided for youth leaving a residential facility	JDAI Collaborative	June 30, 2020	Collaboration	Youth and families will have services available to them as youth reenter the home

Priority Five: *Ensure all juvenile justice system stakeholders are using evidence-based principles to meet the needs of our youthful population.*

Lancaster County has had a Steering Committee for several years. This committee is comprised of the County Juvenile Attorney, Juvenile Probation, Youth Services Center, Lincoln Police and Lancaster County Sheriff's Departments, Health and Human Services, Public Defender, Juvenile Court, Lancaster County Human Services, and the Lancaster County Board. The Juvenile Justice Coordinator serves as the facilitator for this committee. This committee meets regularly and has been able to tackle many issues involving system operations and coordination.

Lancaster County also has a committee to focus on Disproportionate Minority Contact. The Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities Committee is a group of community based and juvenile justice professionals who review data concerning the number of minority youth in the juvenile justice system. Key stakeholders examine policy and procedure as it relates to possible disparate treatment. The committee identifies and reduces gaps in prevention and intervention services for underserved and underrepresented youth through data collection, promoting and supporting culturally-relevant, and evidence based programming.



Lancaster County also has a case processing committee that focuses on youth in detention. This committee meets weekly and attempts to expedite youth's stay in detention.

The Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative Committee meets quarterly to coordinate efforts. The mission is to recognize and encourage prevention efforts through the support of programs and services designed to meet the needs of those youth who are identified as being at-risk or violating the law and those whose behavior is such that they endanger themselves or others. This committee works collectively to address the priorities in the Juvenile Justice Comprehensive Plan.



As a system, Lancaster County has invested in using the principles of Restorative Justice. These principles offer alternatives to traditional juvenile justice systems and school discipline processes. Rather than focusing on punishment, Restorative Justice seeks to repair the harm done. Restorative Justice also holds the potential for victims, youth law violator, and their families to have a direct voice in procedural justice.

Lancaster County has several committees working towards the common agenda of improved system operation and coordination for youth in our care. Working together, we can make a positive impact in the lives of our youth.

Priority 5: Ensure all juvenile justice system stakeholders are using evidence-based principles to meet the needs of our youthful population.

Strategies/Objectives	Action Steps	Responsible Party	Time Line	Resources Needed	Expected Results
Ensure proper services are available in a timely manner	Conduct continuous quality assurance surveys with families in programs	All Stakeholders	June 30, 2019	Collaboration	Service delivery is sensitive to families' needs
	Continuous evaluation of time between request of service to beginning of service	All Stakeholders	June 30, 2019	Collaboration	Better understanding of community needs and any waiting lists
Continuously evaluate programs and processes for effectiveness	Analyze system and program data through statistical software	Juvenile Justice Coordinator	June 30, 2019	Data	Data driven juvenile justice system

JDAI Collaborative Member List

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