



**Fresno County Probation Department
JJCPA-YOBG Annual Plan**

May 2021 – May 2022



Fresno County Probation Department JJCPA-YOBG Annual Plan May 2021

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Part 1. Service Needs, Priorities & Strategy

Section A: Assessment of Existing Services

Fresno County Probation Department (FCPD) partners with a diverse group of county public agencies and community-based organizations to provide services designed to prevent and intervene with at-risk youth, address the needs of youth in the juvenile justice system, and develop plans and broker resources for reentry to the community. This section describes the services most frequently relied upon in an effort to support the needs of the youth and families that are in contact with the FCPD.

Law Enforcement

Fresno County criminal justice agencies view the role of addressing the needs of youth in our community as requiring a collaborative approach. Law enforcement efforts are most present in a proactive approach to reducing youth entrance into the juvenile justice system. There are two programs provided by the Fresno Police Chaplaincy, Resilience Center and Stop Teen Exploitation and Liberate through Hope (STEALTH). The Resilience Center provides professional support for children who have been exposed to violence and are identified at high need for services. STEALTH provides outreach to youth and their family when habitual runaway episodes have occurred. Homeless and runaway youth frequently are arrested for theft and assault. Chen (2006) found that over half of youth with an initial runaway episode are subsequently arrested. Additionally, a sample of runaway and homeless youth have an average of 4.4 arrests. Group and mentoring opportunities are available for families and are designed to meet the needs of these families to interrupt this cycle.

The Fresno Police Department provides a program that educates first graders how to “bounce back” from negative life events. The targets include emotion regulation, impulse control, and accurately identifying causes for negative events in an effort to build coping and resilience. A program that is also facilitated by police is the Fresno Police Activities League (PAL). Youth and police participate in positive activities including boxing, gaming, and learning how to use computers. The program service to increase trust between law enforcement and youth, while engaging them in positive leisure activities.

Probation

Fresno Probation Department embraces the philosophy of probation having a dual role (Trotter, 1999, Skeem, et al, 2007). In other words, both the traditional responsibility of monitoring youth and holding them accountable to the conditions of supervision, while also helping them by connecting them with services and operating as an agent of change are equally valued. In furtherance of that belief, FCPD contracted with the University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute (UCCI) to enhance the utilization of evidence-based practices. UCCI provided the infrastructure, technical assistance, and training to support FCPD work groups in developing strategies to implement a variety of effective practices. The results included an upgraded behavior



management system (sanction and incentive protocols), caseload assignments based on risk rather than geographic area, case plan goals driven by assessment of needs, and contact appointments targeting criminogenic needs utilizing cognitive behavioral interventions (Effective Practices in Community Supervision (EPICS)). The Juvenile Justice Campus (JJC) embarked on a similar process. The use of Core Correctional Practices (CCP), case management, and behavior management were improved for use on the custody units.

The notion that juvenile justice systems may do more harm than good (Lundman, 1993) for many youth, led to the use of diversion. Wilson and Hoge (2012) conducted a meta-analysis and concluded there is support for addressing factors contributing to youthful offending (e.g., mentally ill offenders, substance use, restorative justice) rather than involving them in the juvenile justice system. Additionally, juvenile justice resources are better reserved for the more serious, chronic, and high risk offender population. Lower risk youth placed with higher risk youth or in higher intensity programs may increase their risk and increase recidivism (Dowden, C. and Andrews, D. A. (1999) and Petrosino, Turpin-Petrosino, and Guckenburg (2010)). In light of this research, FCPD reduces the involvement of juvenile justice with appropriate youth and still addresses the needs effectively. Youth risk is assessed with a validated risk assessment, Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT), that categorizes youth into low, moderate, moderate/high, or high risk for recidivism. FCPD offers opportunities for Informal Supervision, Deferred Entry of Justice (DEJ), Truancy Intervention Program (TIP), Victim Offender Reconciliation Program (VORP), and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children programs instead of probation as usual. A variety of factors determine eligibility for these alternative options to traditional probation services including the severity of the charge, risk level, and youth and family needs. Additional descriptions of these offerings will be provided in other sections of this report.

FCPD has several specialty courts and/or caseloads to address the unique needs of the youth under their supervision. There are 5 DPOs that provide intensive supervision for youth that may be lower risk for recidivism, however, have many psychosocial needs. The ability to connect the youth and their family to services is a vital contribution to the community and may reduce the likelihood that the youth continue to engage in risk behaviors.

For those youth that have needs related to mental health, substance use, or intellectual and developmental disabilities, there is a Family Behavioral Health Court. The goals of the court are to connect youth with serious mental illness to treatment services, take into consideration their mental health concerns when finding dispositions, and decrease recidivism through a more intensive treatment and supervision partnership. A similar approach in San Francisco, demonstrated promising results as enrolled youth were less likely to be charged with a new offense and there was a longer time without a new violent crime (McNiell, D.E., and Binder, R.B. (2007). Additionally, youth that complete the program on the Juvenile Justice Campus Floyd Farrow Substance Abuse Unit (SAU) are placed on a specialty caseload to support their reentry



into the community. This allows for improved transition from the institution to the field, as well as greater continuity in the treatment goals.

A similar approach includes a dedicated caseload for youth who are on probation relative to a sexual offense. The DPO works in a coordinated way with the community-based organization that provides cognitive behavioral treatment programming for these youth. Programming includes cognitive behavioral (CBT) and dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) groups over an 18-month to 3-year timeframe. Probation works closely with families, treatment providers, law-enforcement agencies, school districts, the district attorney's office, and the Child Abuse Review Team (C.A.R.T.) to ensure the minor's compliance with conditions or the DEJ. While this is working adequately, there is an interest in increasing internal capacity to provide more in-depth assessment and increase capability of providing structured, evidence-based programming to this population.

School-based probation has led to a well-established partnership between FCPD and the schools. FCPD strategically places DPOs in the communities where the youth live and, thereby, reduce the burden on families to report to the probation offices. This is particularly helpful in the rural areas of the county. The DPO has the added advantage of observing the youth in a more natural environment and can note their daily behavior, study habits, attendance, and adjustment with their peers. The school appreciates the added support, as the DPO is available to intervene as situations demand and allows for more expedited resolution. The family is frequently integrated in discussions towards solving problems that otherwise would hinder youth progress academically, behaviorally, and socially.

In addition to allowing for this collaborative approach between the family, school, and probation, school-based probation allows for interventions and programming, i.e., restorative justice, youth court, and EPICS. The DPO is also available to encourage and support youth's involvement in extra curricula activities (sports, assemblies, clubs, etc.). Having DPOs in the school expands the frequency of informal and formal contacts resulting in improved communication, rapport, and support.

Deputy Probation Officers are placed at mainstream high schools (Bullard, Sunnyside, Roosevelt, Edison, Cambridge/DeWolf, McLane, Fresno, Hoover, and Phoenix) in the Fresno Unified School District, the largest school district in Fresno. By extension, there is greater access to local elementary, middle, and alternative high schools in the area. Two additional DPOs are assigned to Central Unified School District, one is placed at Sanger Unified School District, and finally, two serve Kings Canyon Unified School District.

In summary, school-based DPOs provide the following:

- Coordinate re-entry efforts for youth returning from youth facilities
- Coordinate interventions with the schools and other agencies
- Serve as an agency of change with disruptive or truant youth to reduce risk of entry into the juvenile justice system



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- Intervention in crisis situations involving youth on juvenile probation
 - Assist in the prevention and management of disruptive behavior by all youth

These efforts have the goal of providing for the unique needs of the youth on probation, reducing entrance of youth into the justice system, and improving the school environment for all youth.

As mentioned, several high schools within Fresno County are involved in Youth Courts. This is a promising approach for first-time offenders who are held accountable by their peers (Butts, J.A., Buck, J.B., and Coggeshall, M.B. (2002)). There is a Youth Advisory Council that is actively engaged, as well as an adult group that provides coordination and training for the youth involved. A Fresno County Superior Court judge holds hearings on campus. Because teens understand teens best, the jurors in these hearings are fellow students. These jurors work with the judge to impose sentences that help the offender understand the impact of the offense on his or her family, school, and community.

The DPO has the option of using the Youth Court as an alternative to filing a formal petition with Juvenile Court. This approach is widely utilized as is evidenced by the handling of 135 cases School Year 2017/2018, 181 in School Year 2018/2019, and 129 in School Year 2019/2020, reflecting its value to the probation department, school, court, and youth involved.

FCPD has two DPOs assigned to work with female youth who have been identified as at risk of human trafficking. This determination is made through the administration of the Commercial Sexual Exploitation-Identification Tool (CSE-IT, pronounced "See It"). Those youth that are identified as possible or clear concern may be referred to Friday Court. This specialized hearing allows for the linkage of at-risk youth to a wide array of resources. This proceeding is purely voluntary, service a positive and supportive role, and lacks any punitive response. The DPO undergoes comprehensive training on how to detect, serve, and advocate for those vulnerable to human trafficking.

For youth with significant needs and pose a higher risk for recidivism, FCPD offers the New Horizon Commitment Program on the Juvenile Justice Campus. This program is supported through contracted services and includes a comprehensive plan to reduce risk of reoffending. The core cognitive behavioral intervention delivered on the unit is Thinking for a Change. This 25-session structured, manualized program is divided into three key areas (cognitive restructuring, social skills, and problems solving). Lowenkamp, et.al (2009) found a statistically significant reduction for recidivism for program completers compared to a matched control group who did not receive the intervention. Findings indicate that across groups, younger and higher risk offenders were more likely to be arrested for a new offense during the follow-up period, compared with older and lower risk offenders. This suggests that more intensive dosage may be necessary for improving outcomes. The New Horizons program provides additional programming utilizing a cognitive behavior approach, as well as the use of core correctional practices and EPICS by probation staff. Mental health, family and substance use services are provided in group, family,



and individual modes of delivery. As discharge nears, a reentry case plan is established and includes assistance with enrollment in higher education programs, vocational opportunities, or employment readiness services. The field supervising officer provides regular contacts and ongoing reassessment to continue building on the benefits the youth gained while in the program.

Another important resource for youth residing at the Juvenile Justice Campus is the Chaplaincy services. In addition to be available for spiritual services and pastoral counseling, several positive events are provided. Youth in the program are invited to participate in youth camps, holiday celebrations, car shows, and other positive social activities. FCPD welcomes and supports community involvement in the lives of the youth in their care and views reentry as a vital, collaborative process between the department and the community.

In summary, probation is invested in providing services to reduce the risk to the community and youth by providing direct interventions and connecting families to community-based organizations to meet their needs. In addition, to the assigned DPOs, there are Probation Technician positions that are instrumental to providing services for the youth. The services provided include supporting the DPOs, assisting with placements, monitoring Global Positioning System (GPS) adherence, and providing prevention and intervention services. Partnership with the courts, schools, families, law enforcement and public and community-based agencies is essential to the comprehensive services provided for youth referred to the juvenile probation department. With new practices, there is a risk of net-widening. Fresno County juvenile court and probation services are resolute in their stance to limit involvement and future penetration into the juvenile justice system whenever possible. The objective is to manage a case at the least restrictive level to reduce the criminogenic effects of court involvement, juvenile record, and detention.

Education

The Fresno County Superintendent of School (FCSS) operates both court and community school programs designed to support justice-involved youth in completing their high school education and/or transitioning to other appropriate educational programs. The Alice M. Worsley Court School provides educational services on the Juvenile Justice Campus and for those under probation supervision. The Violet Hentz Educational Academy (VHEA) is a community school for those youth that are identified by probation or their home school district as needing more intensive services. The site provides a collaborative approach between FCSS and FCPD, to provide behavioral, mental health and/or substance use services to the youth who attend school at this facility. Youth typically referred include youth who are not attending their home school or have been expelled from district programs. Grade 7 - 12 students are provided an educational program tailored to meet their individual academic level and behavioral needs.

A Day Reporting Center (DRC), housed on the same location as VHEA, provides treatment by community-based providers to address needs of the youth and their families. The program provides for court-ordered treatment consisting of 30-days GPS monitoring and a 6-month



substance use and mental health treatment program. Those youth in grades 9-12 are eligible and are transitioned back into their home school district upon completion of the program.

Truancy is a challenge in FCSS and leads to poor academic achievement and reduced graduation rates. There are a number of factors that lead to attendance problems including negative peer influences, bullying, social, medical or other needs, pressures for students to help at home, teen pregnancy or parenthood, lack of support for educational goals, poor academic ambition or performance, unmet mental health or learning needs, and low school attachment. The Truancy Intervention Program (TIP) seeks to identify those youth with attendance problems within several school districts and contact the family to identify potential issues that contribute to the truancy. Linking families to services, providing for a system of support, and working with the school personnel are strategies employed by the assigned DPOs to prevent continued truancy and drop-outs. Maynard and colleagues (2012) found that truancy programs demonstrate an overall positive and moderate effect on attendance. Improvements tend to continue post-intervention. While many school districts have a DPO on-site, the majority of smaller and/or rural schools rely on the TIP program to address their truancy concerns given they are not staffed with a DPO.

Mental Health

The Family Behavioral Health Court (FBHC) was mentioned earlier as a probation supported initiative for youth who have mental health or intellectual developmental disability (IDD). Identified youth have a diagnosed serious mental disorder (major depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, mood/anxiety disorders) or an intellectual disability (autism, or organic brain disorder) that contributed to delinquent conduct. As indicated, this is a partnership with probation and several county agencies and community-based organizations. The design includes a court-supported treatment plan for adjudicated youth.

The team consists of two DPOs, a FBHC Coordinator, defense counsel, deputy district attorney, a Department of Behavioral Health clinician, and the juvenile court judge. A comprehensive assessment is conducted to determine eligibility and suitability to the program. An individualized treatment plan is developed based on the needs of the youth and family. These plans are created and maintained by the Child Family Team (CFT) comprised of the youth, family and a multidisciplinary team. Goals are set to address challenges in school, within the family, and the youth's mental health or IDD diagnosis. Focus Forward coordinates the CFT meetings and Uplift Family Services Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) program is the principle provider. ACT is an evidence-based case management system shown to reduce severity of psychiatric symptoms, improve general functioning, and reduce duration and frequency of psychiatric hospitalizations (Vijverbert, R. et.al, 2017). The approach includes an intensive level of treatment including 24/7 availability that includes:



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- Crisis response
 - Individual, group, and/or family therapy
 - Parenting coaching
 - Behavioral coaching
 - Substance use prevention and treatment services
 - Educational and vocational services
 - Medication management
 - Case management services

The providers are involved for approximately one year depending on the individual needs and circumstances of the family, and include three stages, assessment, intervention, and stabilization. Program completion results in successful closure of probation, as well as reduction of community supports, as appropriate.

In addition to the DPO making referrals for youth with mental health needs, Fresno County has an initiative to identify youth and link them to behavioral health agencies. This project, All 4 Youth, is provided by the Department of Behavioral Health and FCSS. Probation supports and assists as needed in these recommendations.

Mental health providers are available for general caseloads and in the JJC. Mental Health Services (MHS) provides coordination and direct services ranging from crisis response to ongoing psychiatric and behavioral health care. Wellpath staff are available daily in the JJC for crisis response, assessment, therapy, and psychoeducational services for the youth. They serve as a resource for staff in assisting in developing a plan that increases the safety and success of youth in their care.

Substance Use

Community-based organizations provide the treatment interventions in the Floyd Farrow Substance Abuse Unit (SAU) in JJC. This designated treatment unit provides for group and family interventions, mental health services, and individual appointments with a substance use disorder counselor. Case management and case planning services include the use of cognitive behavioral interventions and motivational interviewing to reduce the risk of continued substance use and lower recidivism. CBT and Motivational Interviewing are effective in improving substance use outcomes with youth (Waldron and Turner (2008), Dennis ML, et al. (2004)). In addition, the youth are on a designated probation caseload upon discharge to support the reinforcement of the strategies learned in the program and referral for aftercare services. Family Youth and Alternatives (FYA) provide the substance use services in the community and also use a cognitive-behavioral and motivational interviewing approach in treatment delivery.

For youth supervised in field services and identified as needing substance use treatment services, a referral to the FYA includes admission to the Teen Matrix Model. This modality includes individual, family and group sessions, 12 Step meetings, and separate parents and adolescent



education groups. There are ongoing meetings to discuss treatment progress and provide additional resources and support.

Social Services and Reentry Support

There is an array of services for youth who lack family support and need placement or support. The FCPD has a strong relationship with the Department of Social Services (DSS) in the coordination of placements and other resources. Youth and their family are assessed as eligible for CalWorks, Welfare to Work (WTW), Family Stabilization Program, Cal-Learn, and frequently referred to their neighborhood Resource Center.

In addition to housing and emergency service's needs, several agencies partner with FCPD to provide for mentoring and emotional support. Focus Forward has two social workers that work within the FCPD to connect youth to provide comprehensive reentry and case management services to the families. They coordinate review conferences, Child Family Team (CFT) meetings, to discuss progress and additional needs presented by the youth and family. A plan is developed to address any identified needs and make linkages or provide direct services to support the success of the participants. Finally, Boys and Girls Clubs are utilized to provide targeted reentry programs and positive leisure opportunities for youth in their communities.

Fresno County supports a restorative justice approach to raise youth awareness of the consequences of their actions and support making restitution for those actions. Community Justice Conferencing (CJC) provides a Victim Offender Reconciliation Program (VORP) that uses a restorative justice approach, provides mediation, and increases restitution services. CJC reports that since 2009, the youth they serve had a 5-10 percent reduction in recidivism compared to youth that did not participate in their services (who recidivated at a rate of 20-30 percent). Restorative Justice is a promising practice for juvenile offenders, however, more research is needed to determine the population best served with this model (Bergseth, K.J. and Bouffard, J.A. (2012), Bazemore, G. and Umbreit, M. (2011)). CJC has enrolled 46 youth referred by probation in a variety of services (Insight Awareness programs, mediation, cognitive behavioral sessions, family group conferences, and victim offender meetings, and DUI and an addition 32 youth are enrolled in DUI or Cognitive Behavioral sessions).

Section B: Identifying and Prioritizing Focus Areas

Fresno County Probation Department is committed to meeting the needs of youth in an effort to reduce entrance in the juvenile justice system and/or to limit further involvement into the criminal justice system. While the services detailed in the prior section are effective in meeting needs, the department is invested in expanding services to fill gaps, improve resources, and respond to additional concerns in the community. The Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council Phased Response Plan Subcommittee was convened on November 16, 2020, December 8, 2020, January 14, 2021, and February 18, 2021 to identify needed areas to focus on in the coming year.

Fresno County Probation Department

JJCPA-YOBG Annual Plan May 2021



Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council- Phased Response Plan Subcommittee

Name	Agency
Vicki Noel	Probation Department, Juvenile Division Director
Hon. Judge Dolas	Fresno County Juvenile Court
Hon. Judge Nystrom-Geist	Fresno County Juvenile Court
JoAnna Edwards	Public Defender's Office
Susan Holt	Department of Behavioral Health
Joanna Litchenberg	Focus Forward
Pam Coronado	Fresno County Superintendent of Schools
Galen Rutiaga	District Attorney's Office
Tricia Gonzalez	Department of Social Services
Chris Torres	Sheriff's Office
Mindy Casto	Fresno Police Department
Barbara Schulte	Fresno County Juvenile Justice Commission
Susan Murdock	Mental Health System, Inc.
Debra Rush	Breaking the Chains

This collaborative process resulted in the identification of the following areas to further develop over the upcoming year.

- Disparities in Services by Area
 - Fresno County is the 6th largest county based on land area (nearly 6,000 square miles) and has a large agricultural area. The eastern and western regions of the county have a dearth of services and access to public transportation is limited.
- Limited Youth-Appropriate Substance Use Disorder Services and Programs
 - A review of existing services identified a lack of residential options and limited programs for Intensive Outpatient Programs and Outpatient programs.
- Insufficient Access and Availability of Culturally and Gender-Responsive Mental Health Services
 - Support is needed to assist agencies to expand programming that is responsive to the population served, as well as leveraging collaborative opportunities to share resources.
- Gaps in Delivery of Evidence-Based Services
 - There is little known about the quality of services offered and the utilization of structured, evidence-based approaches. Needed programs include substance use disorders, sex offender treatment, core programming to lower recidivism, and crisis de-escalation
- Limited Data Collection and Sharing
 - Information sharing is hampered by outdated and disconnected data systems



Disparities in Services by Area

Leone, Quinn and Osher (2002) found that probation services work best with youth “when offered by and within a variety of social and justice agencies within the community.” Effective programs collaborate and form connections with other agencies to provide a complement of services that are flexible enough to meet the unique needs of families. Many times, rural areas have limited resources or there are accessibility concerns for families in more remote parts of the county. Current efforts to provide more service coverage include school-based probation, reporting opportunities in local police departments, telephone or video conferencing options, and field visits by DPOs who are assigned cases based on geographic areas.

Fresno County Probation Department hopes to expand on the availability of services in the eastern and western parts of the county by supporting more satellite sites that provide treatment services, more frequent use of EPICS appointments when field visits are conducted, and training providers to deliver relevant programming in agencies located in these areas.

In some cases, the capability of expanding services to these remote areas will be prohibitive, as such, a reliable and affordable method of transportation will be required to ensure access to appropriate services. Exploring options and funding for public transportation and/or private options such as app-based transportation networks, ridesharing, or taxis is necessary to reduce the burden of transportation barriers.

Limited Youth-Appropriate Substance Use Disorder Services and Programs

Availability of youth-appropriate substance use services is vital to positive outcomes. Programming needs to be cognizant of the developmental needs of youth and be responsive to the still developing brain and impediments in long-term decision-making. In addition, effective programs utilize a family-oriented approach and must engage the parents or guardians to develop their capacity to transfer the concepts and skills from the program to the child’s home environment. Finally, youth have special considerations related to their substance use and inter-related factors such as peer relationships, mental health needs, identity formation, and self-efficacy.

Fresno County lacks resources for residential and outpatient treatment for youth with substance use disorders. Expanding the range of options to youth and their families on probation is a key priority. Exploring existing agency capacity to expand to include substance use disorder treatment will be the first step in addressing this concern. One step to support this expansion is offering training to community-based organizations on a group curriculum, Cognitive Behavioral Interventions – Substance Use.

Insufficient Access and Availability of Culturally and Gender-Responsive Mental Health Services

Understanding the historical construct of institutional racism is fundamental to critically examine the youth justice system’s structural investments in custody, control and punishment to achieve public safety. This system of racial hierarchy must be clearly understood in the current construct,



acknowledged, and directly engaged if we are to achieve equity and well-being for communities of Black and Brown young people.

It is critical that a stance of inclusion and respect be at the core of every interaction with the youth and their families. In Probation, the philosophy of cultural responsiveness is seen in several ways. First, we are comprised of a diversified staff. It is essential that all youth can look to staff for relatable role models and opportunities to talk with adults with a shared cultural experience. In addition, community-based organizations that specialize in or work with specialty populations are represented in the network of providers utilized by Probation. Staff make referral decisions based on resources that are most likely to result in a feeling of trust and comfort by the family. There is an effort to reflect a variety of cultures most represented among the youth at the Juvenile Justice Campus in the artwork displayed, stories and books available, menus and snacks, as well as providing cultural heritage events or activities.

Community-based organizations are available to provide additional programming and support in areas geographically convenient and responsive to the diverse population in Fresno County. One such program that has promising evidence to support improved outcomes is El Joven Noble provided at Fresno Barrios Unidos Services. The program El Joven Noble targets character development and promotes healthy relationships and the reduction of community violence, unintended pregnancies, and substance abuse. There are specialty groups geared towards girls at several community-based organizations. Fresno Barrios Unidos offers Womxn Empowered a group to provide a safe and inclusive space for youth to voice ideas, develop positive identity and advocate for their community. Youth build leadership and advocacy skills alongside peers and with adult mentors. They also provide a structured group curriculum called Xinachtli (Germinating Seed). It is designed to provide young women and non-binary youth the guidance for a healthy development into adulthood. Over 16 sessions (10-week period for in-house groups), youth will heal from trauma, learn life skills, and develop a support system of peers.

While there are some options available to provide a culturally relevant and gender-responsive experience for youth in our care, this opportunity needs to be more expansive, available, and affordable. FCPD will develop opportunities for agency collaboration to better meet the cultural and gender needs of the families served. In an effort to ensure this is prioritized, all RFPs that are published will include a provision that services are expected to be delivered in a culturally and gender-responsive style.

Gaps in Delivery of Evidence-Based Services

Probation has invested in enhancing the approach used in juvenile field services, through the implementation of CCP in the field, i.e., Effective Practices In Community Supervision (EPICS), a system of incentives and responses, and an internal coaching system for Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI). Reducing youth antisocial behavior, social skill and emotion regulation deficits, problems with family and peer relationships, gang affiliation, substance misuse, mental health issues, self-harm, poor academic performance, aggression and violence requires a



comprehensive plan that utilizes proven models of intervention delivered with fidelity. Currently, the availability of programs that incorporate evidence-based practices, and structured interventions based on a cognitive-behavioral model needs further expansion. This emphasis on EBP interventions will also be stated as a requirement within RFPs released by the FCPD.

The University of Cincinnati School of Criminal Justice will support this expansion through on-going technical and training assistance. The topics for development, both internally and in the provider network, include core cognitive behavioral curriculum (Free Your Mind), youth substance use disorder curriculum (Cognitive Behavioral Interventions - Substance Use (Youth)), and additional modules based on Free Your Mind targeting emotion regulation, mental toughness, and gang affiliation and Juvenile Sex Offender curriculum (I Decide: Cognitive-Behavioral Intervention for Adolescents to Control Impulses and Create Identity). Additional evidence-based enhancements proposed for the upcoming year include the adoption of a structured crisis de-escalation model for FCPD, Positive Action (classroom curriculum) and Family Systems Trauma Model and/or Multisystemic Therapy (MST).

Finally, FCPD is planning to implement a comprehensive Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) model to provide for on-going monitoring and enhancement of implementation of evidence-based services. Each probation division will identify targets for improvement, develop actions plans, and monitor for desired outcomes or indicators. A system for reviewing and supporting implementation enhancements for community-based partners will be an essential element in the CQI Plan.

Limited Data Collection and Sharing

A recent upgrade in the Juvenile Division data management system has expanded the amount of information captured and enhanced the security of the electronic record. Unfortunately, sharing information among county agencies and community-based partners is inadequate. There is no county-wide data base or established relationships for shared data among partners. This hinders the ability to ensure the services provided to a family are congruent, comprehensive, and avoid duplication. Limitations in access to information by the court, probation, and providers reduces the efficiency and accuracy of decision-making. Improvements in communication through a shared data system will be an option for exploration.

Section C: Juvenile Justice Action Strategy

The Fresno County Probation Department (FCPD) is an integral component of the juvenile justice system. FCPD perform intervention, prevention, investigative and supervision services of youth who have been noticed or identified by the juvenile justice system. FCPD's Intake Unit is the gatekeeper of law enforcement referrals and determines the appropriate court of action within the system. Deputy Probation Officers (DOPs), determine the pathway for the youth. They utilize evidence-based assessments to develop an individualized case plan built from the protective factors and needs identified from the assessments.



Juvenile Supervision services are provided for youth if placed on formal probation by the Juvenile Delinquency Court. The evidence-based assessment (PACT) continues to inform specific goals to lead to outcomes of successful supervision and recidivism reduction. Based on the risk to reoffend, DPOs work collaboratively with the youth, family, and community organizations to develop an appropriate case plan and fulfill their needs. DPOs are instrumental in ensuring youth are receiving support and progressing with educational goals, treatment needs, and meeting the orders of the court. DPOs prioritize service selection based on the use of evidence-based options within the youth's home community. DPOs serve the metropolitan and rural communities within Fresno County and work collaboratively with the organizations, schools and law enforcement agencies from those areas. This coordinated work between these partners increase information sharing and consistency of approach to better meet the needs of the community and the family.

FCPD provides services to youth that have been ordered by the Court into out of home placement or to received AB 12 services. Mandatory monthly contact with youth is performed by the DPO to ensure the identified needs of the youth are being met along with continuing efforts to offer reunification services. Every effort is used in identifying a least restrictive, family-like environment for youth whenever possible. Continuing to remain at the forefront of placement services for youth is the continued implementation of the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR), this includes developing resource families and conducting meaningful Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings with those invested in the youth's life. Short Term Residential Treatment Programs continue to be an option considered for youth that have been ordered to receive placement services.

FCPD continues to utilize SB 163 wraparound services, a family-focused, strength-based program developed as an alternative to out of home care, while also offering in-home supportive services. This allows an opportunity for the treatment team, youth, family, and supportive individuals to work together while the youth remains in the home with the aim of family stabilization and permanency.

Fresno County Probation Department remains focused on strategies for reduction of youth entering the juvenile justice system by utilizing a range of options. The intent is to address the needs of youth without bringing them formally into the justice system. As such, juvenile probation services may include hearings for youth for competency determination, findings of deferred entry of judgement or informal supervision (with or without court orders), and probation without wardship.

Section D: Comprehensive Plan Revisions

As developed by the JJCC Phased Response Plan Subcommittee, focus areas were identified and plan revisions to address gaps led to revisions for this year. Despite ambitious plans, many opportunities were hindered as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. Opportunities to coordinate, develop, and implement new practices were postponed or hampered by limited in-person meetings and collaboration.



Collaboration and coordinated care across engaged agencies is essential in the effective provision of services. The system strives to be flexible in meeting the unique needs of the families. This effort is more challenging in rural areas with limited resources and accessibility concerns for families in more remote parts of the county. Current efforts to provide more service coverage include school-based probation, reporting opportunities in local police departments, telephone or video conferencing options, and field visits by DPOs who are assigned cases based on geographic areas. In addition, Fresno County Probation Department hopes to expand on the availability of services in the eastern and western parts of the county by supporting more satellite sites that provide treatment services, more frequent use of EPICS appointments when field visits are conducted, and training providers to deliver relevant programming in agencies located in these areas. Treatment modalities/curricula and contracted providers will be required to ensure their programs are rooted with evidence-based principles, are culturally and gender responsive, and youth appropriate.

As FCPD continues its commitment to providing effective services, the identification of a validated, and dynamic needs assessment tool will be a priority for juvenile sex offenders. Currently the Juvenile Sexual Offense Recidivism Risk Assessment Tool (JSORRAT-II) is utilized to determine risk of reoffending, however, it is limited in the degree of information provided on the needs requiring targeting to reduce the risk.

Utilizing such a tool is essential to a comprehensive case plan for the individual youth with a sex offense. As mentioned in the section on Gaps and barriers of service delivery and areas of service, FCPD will explore opportunities to collaborate with county agencies and organizations. Serving as a liaison between these groups positions the department to build pathways to the establishment of new or expanded services for justice-involved youth and families. Training on the use of newly resourced curricula and tools will be an ongoing initiative to keep staff abreast of the additional techniques being implemented to support families.

The FCPD Juvenile Division revised the sanctions and incentives matrix to reflect more options, clarify the purpose of the system in targeting criminogenic needs, and increase the consistency of application. Additional items were added, especially in the area of incentives and awarding of those items were tied to specific behavioral indicators commonly associated with probation success and risk reduction. Efforts were made to increase the variety and range of options in the sanctions grid. Finding lower level sanctions is optimal to reduce the reliance on detention days in response to violations of probation. One common sanction, use of community service, was unavailable due to the closure of a prior provider and inability to secure a replacement agency for the oversight of the community service work program. The hope is that an internal solution will not only allow for this option to be available, but also enhance the use of community service to a more restorative justice mindset. By putting the community service in a light of helping a charitable organization, non-profit organization, or public agency it may represents the first time a youth has done something that contributed to society in a positive way. While this may be initiated to

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respond to a violation of probation, the hope is the youth receive a more beneficial outcome rather than receiving a punishment.



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Part 2. Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA)

Section A: Information and Data Collection

A recent upgrade in the Juvenile Division has expanded the amount of information captured and enhanced the security of the electronic record. Unfortunately, sharing information among county agencies and community-based partners is inadequate. There is no county-wide data base or established relationships for shared data among partners. Improvements in communication through a shared data system will be an option for exploration.

FCPD provides information to and receives annual data from the California Department of Justice by means of the Juvenile Court and Probation Statistical System (JCPSS). In addition, annual data surveys are conducted through the Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC) and monthly statistics gathered from the current data base. All shared information and data are used to direct resources and guide decision making within the FCPD management team. This function will be expanded upon with the implementation of a departmental CQI Plan that will target quality improvements based on the developmental abilities of the units.

Section B: Juvenile Justice Coordinating Councils

Yes, we have a JJCC.



Section C: Funded Program, Strategies and/or System Enhancements

Overview of JJCPA and YOBB Funded Programs					
Program	Funding Source		Type of Service		
	JJCPA	YOBB	Prevention/ Intervention	In- Custody	Aftercare/ Re-entry
School Based DPOs	X		X		
VHEA/ DRC	X		X		X
Family Behavioral Health Court	X		X		
Juvenile Justice Campus Substance Abuse Unit	X	X		X	X
DPO Sex Offender Program	X		X		
DPOs assigned to Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	X		X		
Informal Probation Prevention	X		X		
Focus Forward Social Workers	X		X		X
Juvenile Services Probation Technicians	X		X		
Juvenile Justice Campus New Horizons Program		X		X	X
Intensive Probation Supervision		X	X		X
Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT)		X	X		
Truancy Intervention Program		X	X		
Juvenile Justice Boys and Girls Club		X	X	X	X
Victim Offender Reconciliation Program (VORP)/Community Justice Conference (CJC)		X	X		
Juvenile Mentoring Program		X	X	X	X



Evidence Upon Which it is Based: Please refer to Part I for evidence.

Description: Please refer to Part I for program description(s).

Part 3. Youthful Offender Block Grant (YOBG)- (Welfare & Institutions Code Section 1961(a))

Section A: Strategy for Non-707(b) Offenders

Fresno County Probation Department seeks to provide services that ensure public safety while addressing the unique needs of the youth placed on supervision. This philosophy drives the decisions related to detention, commitment, informal or formal supervision, and case planning decisions. FCPD relies on guidance from a large body of research that indicates that recidivism reduction is best achieved through the use of a validated risk assessment to determine intensity of services, focus on criminogenic need areas as targets for change, and utilization of proven interventions implemented with quality and fidelity (Andrews, et.al. (1990), Gendreau, P. (1996), Gendreau, P. et.al., (2002)). The department strives to apply these principles from a policy level and in day-to-day decisions that provide for the best services to the community and the individual youth.

Risk Principle

The risk principle states “who” should be treated. Under this principle, youth’s level of risk should be evaluated using a validated risk assessment tool. More intensive treatment services should be reserved for those who are assessed to be at a high to moderate risk of re-offending in the future. Low risk offenders should be given minimal service. Including low risk individuals in more intensive services can disrupt their lives (i.e. family, school, employment) and can increase their risk of re-offending in the future (Andrews et al., 1990).

Fresno County Probation Department uses the PACT (Positive Achievement Change Tool) to assess all youth on formal supervision. The tool measures a youth’s risk and protective factors across 12 domains (aggression, alcohol and drugs, attitudes/behavior, criminal history, employment, family, living arrangements, mental health, relationships, school, skills, and use of free time). Risk of recidivism is categorized into low, moderate, moderate/high and high risk to reoffend. (<https://vant4ge.com/assessments-agnostic/m-pact/>). Staff will be trained on an updated version of the PACT (PACT 2020) in the Spring or Summer of 2021. Select staff will be trained as trainers to allow for greater efficiency in training newly hired DPOs and greater sustainability of the tool.

In further implementation of the risk principle, FCPD Juvenile Division will be reorganizing the probation caseloads to be based on risk rather than strictly geographic area. This move will allow for a more strategic distribution of cases among DPOs resulting in more frequent contacts and interventions for the higher risk juveniles.



Need Principle

Second, the need principle states “what” should be treated. The most effective treatment programs identify and target those domains that have been shown to be correlated to criminal behavior. These risk factors, or criminogenic needs, are dynamic. They can be changed while static factors, like prior criminal history, cannot be changed. Research has identified a number of criminogenic needs that should be targeted. They include anti-social attitudes, values, beliefs, peer associations, personality, education/employment, family, substance abuse, and leisure/recreation. These should be the focus of individual case plans while they are on supervision. Luong, D. and Wormith, J.S. (2011) found that having a validated risk assessment without developing a case plan to address the elevated criminogenic needs does little to reduce recidivism. They found that “a match between assessed need and identified intervention was associated with a 37.9% reduction in likelihood of recidivism for high risk offenders. Furthermore, the absence of interventions to address identified needs (i.e., under identification of interventions) was associated with an 81.7% increase in likelihood of recidivism.” Additional case planning training is planned to reinforce the importance of utilizing the assessment results in the development of the case plan and the referrals selected for the youth.

Responsivity Principle

Finally, the responsivity principle indicates “how” treatment services should be delivered. This principle can be divided into two components. Under specific responsivity, the goal is to remove particular barriers and set offenders up for success while they are receiving treatment. In particular, an offender’s learning style or motivation level can limit an offender’s ability to benefit from treatment. Therefore, these issues should be identified and addressed by practitioners. Treatment services should be matched to offenders according to these characteristics (Andrews et al., 1990). The second component, general responsivity posits that practitioners should implement a treatment modality that most youth respond well to. Cognitive-behavioral therapy strategies have been shown to successfully change behavior when they are designed and implemented with high fidelity (Andrews & Dowden, 2006).

As noted previously in this report, FCPD values an inclusive and culturally and gender responsive environment. Maintaining this approach is a key decision point in the recruitment and hiring of staff, selection of programming and practices, and the creation of policies and procedures. The use of evidence-based practices has been an important consideration in the provision of treatment services. Those providers that contract with FCPD primarily apply a cognitive behavioral model in their services delivery. The DPOs are trained in Thinking for a Change and provide the group both in the institution and the field. Additional evidence-based curricula planned for implementation in 2021 include Cognitive Behavioral Interventions - Substance Use (youth), Free Your Mind (Core Curriculum) and additional modules on Emotion Regulation, Mental Toughness, and Gang Intervention and Peers, and I Decide (juvenile sexual offender treatment program). In addition to these group interventions, there are plans to provide an evidence-based model for crisis de-escalation, programming to increase school success, and family therapy (Multisystem Therapy and



Trauma Focused Family Therapy). These additions will allow for a greater capacity to refer youth to effective programming. The probation department will support community-based organizations through providing training to agencies open to delivering the groups. Existing services will continue to be utilized to provide for mentoring, case management, restorative justice, and mental health services.

Specialty Caseloads

To better meet the needs of youth and families, the court and FCPD have developed several specialty caseloads. To provide for more frequent contact and convenience, several schools will continue to have an on-site probation officer. The Violet Hentz Educational Academy (VHEA) will continue to provide an option for youth who are less successful in the traditional school environment. There are specialized caseloads for the Family Behavioral Health Court (FBHC), Substance Use Disorder, Sexual Offender, and for youth victims of commercial sexual exploitation.

Reentry

Out of home placement results in disengagement from family, school, and their community. This disruption may result in a loss of connection and stability upon discharge. For youth that are in placement or spend time in the JJC, FCPD makes every effort to prepare and support that person's reentry into the community. The goal is to reduce recidivism upon their return to the community. The process starts as early as possible as the youth transitions from the institution or placement and return to the home. Services are coordinated to ensure clear communication between the family and all involved agencies. This effort is led by a contracted social worker from Focus Forward, and involves the designated DPO, family, youth, school representative, and relevant service providers.

In addition to ensuring stability in housing, school, and other basic needs, the assigned DPO continues to address treatment needs through the use of EPICS and/or referrals to address unmet needs or aftercare. Providing follow-up reentry care in probation has been shown to have a slight to modest improvement in outcomes when compared to youth that do not receive aftercare or supportive reentry services (Bouchard, J. et.al. (2018), James, C. et.al., 2013). This approach is more efficacious with youth that are higher risk to recidivate, those with violent offenses, and when services are directed at the individual needs of the youth. Fresno County seeks to provide more intensive services to youth that are higher risk for recidivism and pose the greater risk to the community. The youth are matched to services based on their criminogenic and responsivity needs.

Section B: Regional Agreements

N/A

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Section C: Funded Programs, Placements, Services, Strategies and/or System Enhancements

Overview of JJCPA and YOBS Funded Programs					
Program	Funding Source		Type of Service		
	JJCPA	YOBS	Prevention/ Intervention	In- Custody	Aftercare/ Re-entry
School Based DPOs	X		X		
VHEA/ DRC	X		X		X
Family Behavioral Health Court	X		X		
Juvenile Justice Campus Substance Abuse Unit	X	X		X	X
DPO Sex Offender Program	X		X		
DPOs assigned to Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	X		X		
Informal Probation Prevention	X		X		
Focus Forward Social Workers	X		X		X
Juvenile Services Probation Technicians	X		X		
Juvenile Justice Campus New Horizons Program		X		X	X
Intensive Probation Supervision		X	X		X
Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT)		X	X		
Truancy Intervention Program		X	X		
Juvenile Justice Boys and Girls Club		X	X	X	X
Victim Offender Reconciliation Program (VORP)/Community Justice Conference (CJC)		X	X		
Juvenile Mentoring Program		X	X	X	X

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Nature of Coordination with JJCPA: Fresno County Probation Department uses the JJCPA funds for a program that focuses on school-based interventions, as well as other specialized supervision caseloads for youth who are on probation. The services provided with JJCPA funds coordinate with the Youthful Offender Block Program by enabling FCPD to provide a wide range of needed serves ranging from intervention to intensive supervision services.

Description: Please refer to Part I for program description(s).



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