

**Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act &
Youthful Offender Block Grant (JJCPA-YOBG)**

**FY 2018-19
Consolidated Annual Plan**

Date: May 1, 2018

County Name: Marin

Contact Name: Kevin Lynch

Telephone Number: (415) 473-6620

E-mail Address: klynch@marincounty.org

Instructions:

Government Code Section 30061(b)(4) and Welfare & Institutions Code Section 1961(b) call for consolidation of the annual plans required for JJCPA and YOBG.

Please submit your most up-to-date consolidated plan.

The rest of this document is a standardized template for a consolidated county plan. If you find it helpful to use this template, please do so.

Your submission will be posted, as submitted, to the BSCC website.

Please e-mail your plan to:

JJCPA-YOBG@bscc.ca.gov



Comprehensive Multi-Agency Juvenile Justice Plan

County of Marin

December 2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Executive Summary	1
2. Marin County Juvenile Justice Data Trends	3
3. Juvenile Justice Funding	11
4. Marin County Probation Department Juvenile Justice Strategy	14
5. Focus Group Input	20
6. Conclusion	30
7. Report Recommendations	32

Executive Summary

The Marin County Probation Department has prepared this “Comprehensive Multi-Agency Juvenile Justice Plan” report in order to comply with the requirements of the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act, or AB1913, which was established in 2000. This law provides counties with funding to support local, coordinated and evidence-based efforts to address delinquency issues in California. Previous versions of this report were produced in 2000, 2008, and 2013, and each version is intended to update the local stakeholders about the issues in juvenile justice and ensure the plan is current, effective and appropriate.

With the passage of AB1998 in 2016, the State of California has initiated several changes to its reporting process for juvenile justice funding. This change in law may be the first indication of a move to combine the funding streams of AB1913 and the Youthful Offender Block Grant (YOBG), which was a product of the 2007 legislation known as “Juvenile Justice Realignment, or SB81. Because these two funding streams were conceived by separate legislation, the State systems for managing these funds have been unconnected, for the most part. It is clear, however, with the passage of AB1998, that the trend is moving towards combining them.

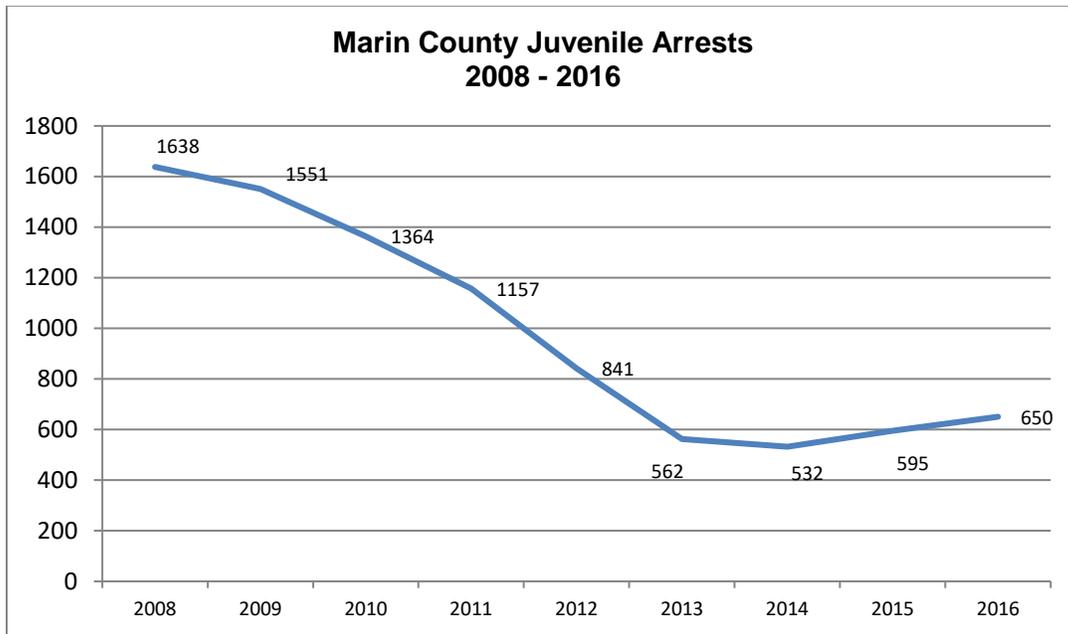
This report provides a comprehensive view of the state of juvenile justice in Marin County. It begins with a review of the most relevant statistical data, which reflect a continuation of the significant decline in all measures of juvenile crime that began in 2008. This document details the major funding streams used to support most efforts in juvenile justice in our jurisdiction. It also explains the Probation Department’s overarching strategy for juvenile justice, which is to focus its efforts and services on youth determined through an actuarial risk assessment instrument to be at high risk for recidivism. The Department also seeks to simultaneously and equally stress three major areas in its work with this population of youth; accountability, treatment and support. The Juvenile Division of the Probation Department maintains a focus on accountability, as this is a core function of the Department. It has also long championed the importance of treatment, and it provides a variety of no-cost treatment services to youth and families. The “opportunity” branch of its services is relatively new, with two major examples being the collaboration with Canal Welcome Center in providing mentoring to youth and parents from the Latino community, and the Youth Working for Change program, which provides vocational opportunities to youth. Finally, the report also discusses the input gleaned from juvenile justice stakeholders during focus groups and individual interviews, which echoed a variety of themes that are explained in a later section of this document.

Prior to concluding, this report provides recommendations for Marin County's juvenile justice system, including:

1. Maintain strategy of allocating resources towards youth determined to be at high risk for recidivism, and providing services for accountability, treatment and opportunity to all youth referred to the juvenile justice system when appropriate
2. Re-initiate efforts to address the issue of ethnic disparities in juvenile justice
3. Assess viability of some of the suggestions from the focus group process, including:
 - Review span and scope of services (including services for parents) and identify gaps
 - Increase opportunities for recreational activities for at-risk youth
 - Develop and implement services that address criminogenic factors
 - Enhance families' understanding of both Juvenile Court and juvenile probation process
 - Conduct focus groups of youth and families to obtain their input on value of services
4. Take advantage of opportunities to conduct formal evaluations of programming to assess effectiveness

Marin County Juvenile Justice Data Trends

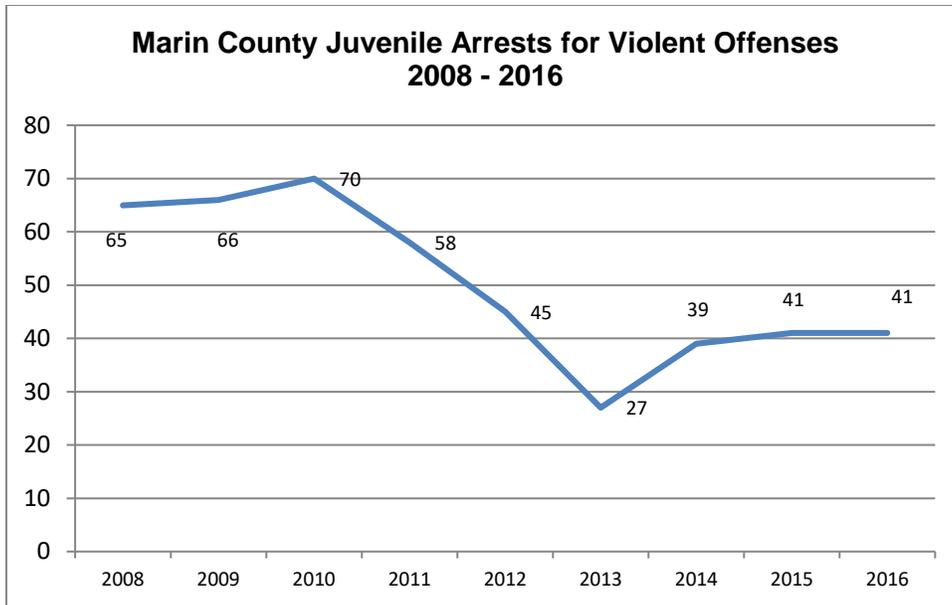
By virtually any measure, Marin County remains one of the safest communities in California in which to live. According to the California State Attorney General's Office, in 2014, Marin's rate of violent crime per 100,000 was less than half the rate for the State as a whole¹. Juvenile crime rate trends in Marin County are leading the way for overall crime rate reductions in this community, as the juvenile rate has fallen precipitously since 2008. The chart below shows that the number of arrests of juveniles in Marin County has plummeted by more than 60% since the mid-2000s².



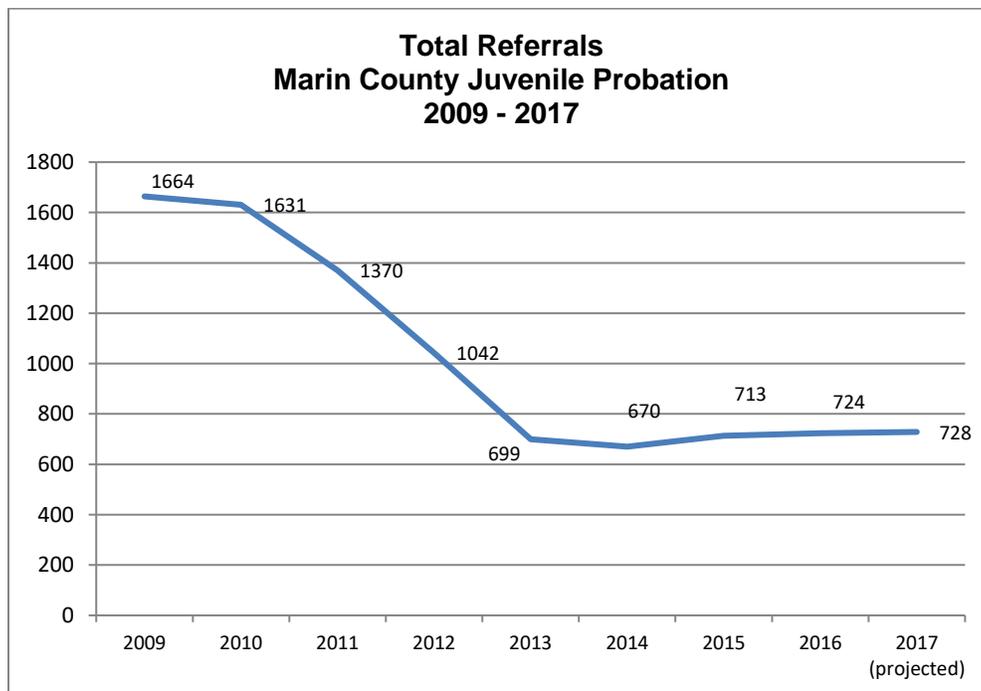
When drilling down on arrests of Marin County juveniles for violent crimes (a better indicator of a community's sense of safety), a similar trend line appears.

¹ California State Attorney General Office
<https://openjustice.doj.ca.gov/>

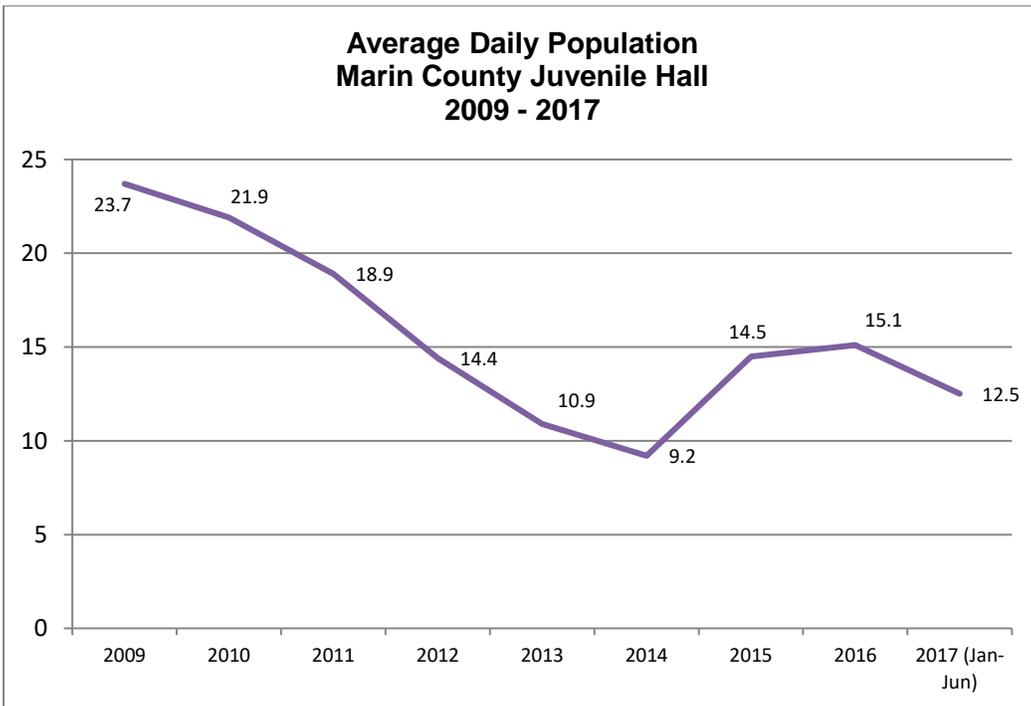
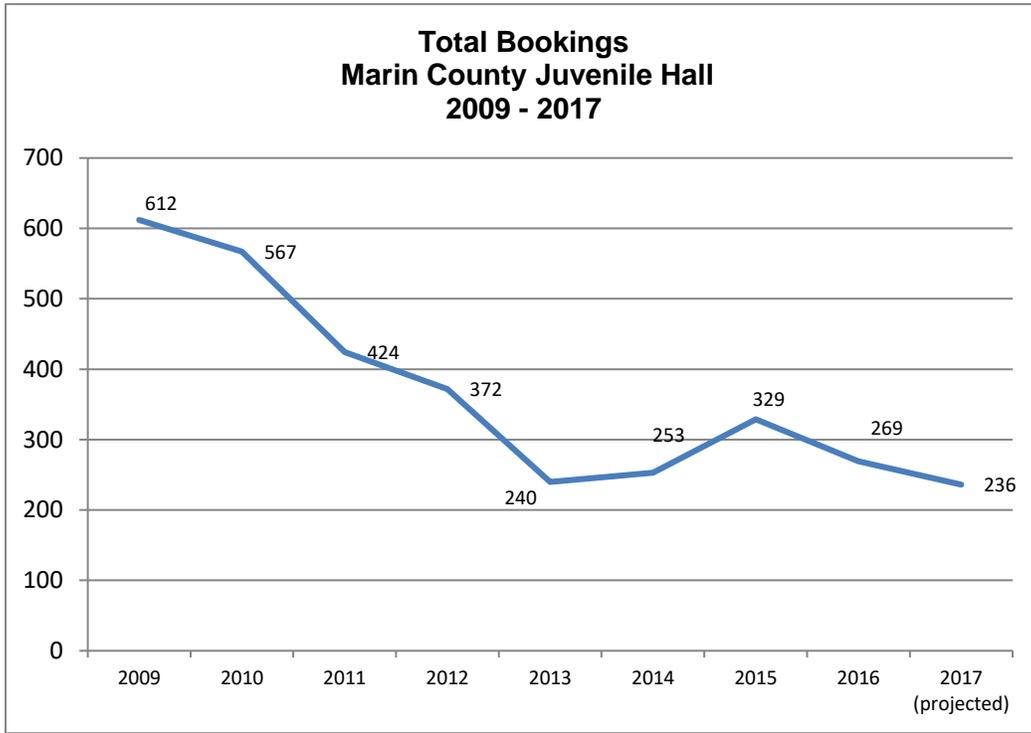
² *ibid*



The impact of this reduction in juvenile crime on the Marin County Probation Department has been significant. The following three charts reflect the drop in referrals to the Juvenile Division of the Probation Department, bookings to Juvenile Hall and average daily population of the Hall; all three indicators show a similar downward trend line³.



³ Marin County Probation Department data records



There are several other nuances to the data discussion that are worth reviewing in greater detail.

“New Normal”

While the overall trend line for juvenile justice data in Marin County since 2009 has been down, it is important to note that it has leveled off since 2013, and has remained remarkably stable each year. It is fair to say, after nearly four years of a consistent level of referrals for juvenile arrests, that we have possibly reached the nadir for cases in the system. This would be called, perhaps, a “new normal,” for the foreseeable future.

What has caused the drop in juvenile crime?

It is likely that the dramatic reductions in juvenile crime are a composite result of changes in laws, changes in youth behavior and the introduction of services and interventions. This section of the report will review each of those factors.

There have been significant changes in laws over the past five years that have undoubtedly contributed to the decline in juvenile arrests. The reduction in severity of 11357(b) of the Health and Safety Code, for example, from a misdemeanor to an infraction, took effect in 2012 and that likely had a substantial impact on the overall number of referrals to the Probation Department (citations for infractions are sent to Traffic Court). More recently, the passages of Propositions 47, 57 and 64 in recent years have all reduced penalties for a number of situations which had once been criminal offenses.⁴

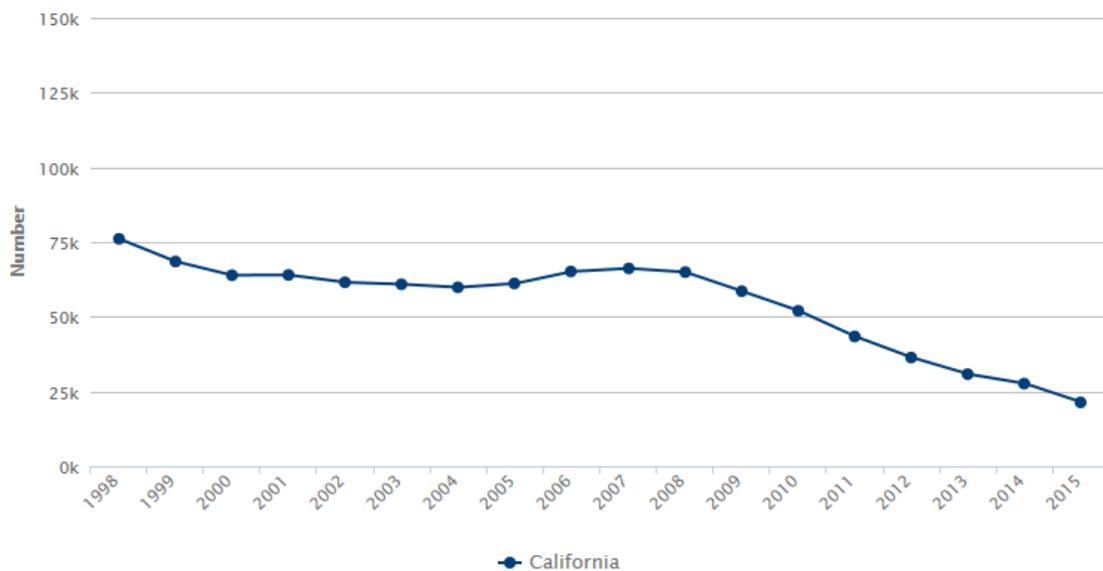
However, it would likely be incorrect to conclude that juvenile crime has not been reduced, and that only changes in laws are the cause of fewer arrests. There clearly has been some sort of transformation in youth behavior since the mid-2000s that will explain at least a part of the reduction. It is illogical to attribute the wide breadth and depth of these changes, all occurring across types of offenses (violence, drugs, property, etc.), different jurisdictions (some that emphasize enforcement approaches to delinquency and others that do not), and often competing kinds of interventions (juvenile crime rates have dropped almost everywhere, even in jurisdictions that are employing radically different approaches to addressing juvenile delinquency), solely to changes in laws. The best defense of that statement is that juvenile crime has also seen reductions in states other than California. While it is tempting for some to connect this change in behavior to local efforts, programs and strategies, it would be hard for that position to remain credible after

⁴ one of the most glaring reductions occurred in Proposition 64, which reduced Sales of Marijuana from what had been a felony to an infraction offense punishable only by a fine and referral to drug education

much scrutiny. It is far more likely that this change in youth behavior is related to a larger social factor that we have yet to identify.⁵

This development is particularly stunning given that it is occurring exactly during the time when predictions from the 1990s were for just the opposite effect; this was the era when even respected criminologists were warning of a “wave of super-predators,” which fed into the unwarranted hysteria that led to the implementation of punitive juvenile justice laws. As the following chart shows, that prediction has been resoundingly discredited.

**Number of Arrests of Juveniles for Felony Offenses
California
1998 - 2015**



A final possible “culprit” in the cause for reduced juvenile crime is the notion that increased services and programs have helped. In 2000, California introduced the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act, which funded local jurisdictions to develop programs that met with their particular needs. In 2008, the State of California underwent “realignment,” and one of the products was the additional funding to counties to address delinquency. The Youthful Offender Block Grant (YOBG), under SB 81, provides local jurisdictions with funding for a wide range of services to address delinquency issues. Since its introduction in 2008, the YOBG program has allocated between 110 and 120 million dollars each year to counties, using a formula that takes into account both population and juvenile crime rates. It is hard to believe that the investment of more than one billion dollars has not had any impact on reducing juvenile crime. One of the clearest indicators of this has been the

⁵ One of the most intriguing, and as yet unproven, theories is that the advent of the digital age, and particularly social media, has had a significant impact on youth behavior, and has contributed to the decrease in delinquency by occupying, engaging and/or distracting youth from criminal behavior.

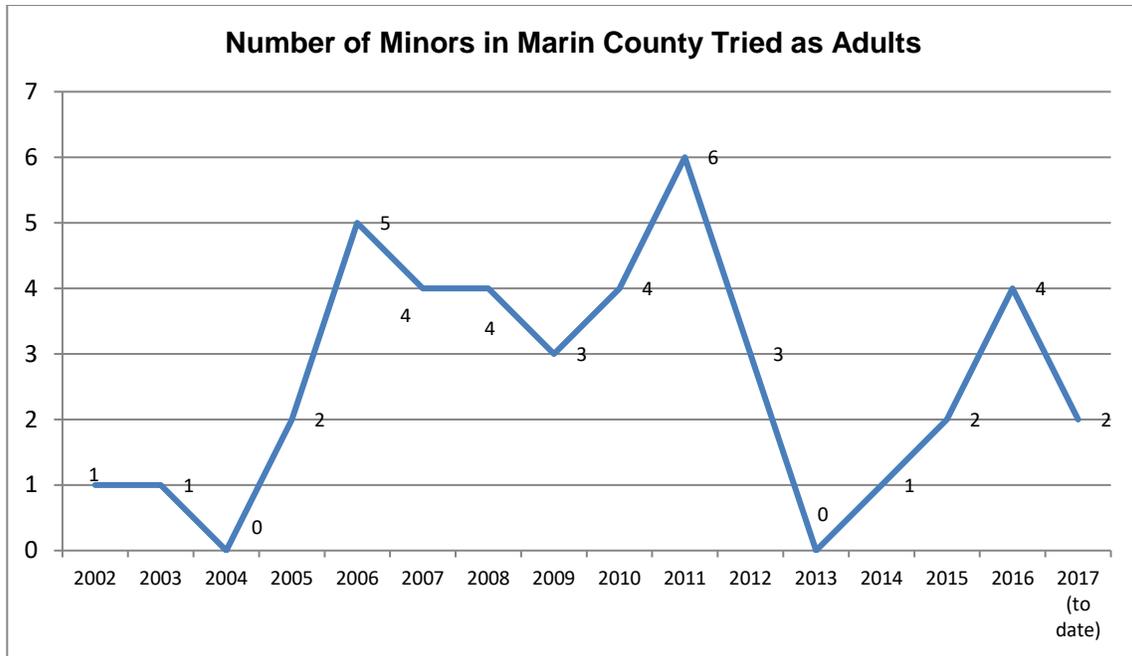
impact on the Division of Juvenile Justice (formerly known as California Youth Authority), which is responsible for housing and managing most of the youth charged with serious and violent crime. In 2007, the year before implementation of SB81, there were over 2,000 offenders detained at the facilities. In July of 2017, there were only 641⁶. The introduction of local programming options, along with better understanding of how to allocate resources to address delinquency, are certainly contributors to this result. They are also products of the funding provided under both YOBG and JJCPA over the past 10 years.

Changes in laws, the evolution of youth behavior in our society, and the infusion of funding for youth oriented programs and services have all helped to contribute to the dramatic reduction in juvenile crime that California has experienced over the past decade. Teasing out which has had the greatest impact is best left to social science researchers of the future, who will have the benefit of not only their expertise, but also more data and, most helpful of all, hindsight.

Transfers to Adult Court

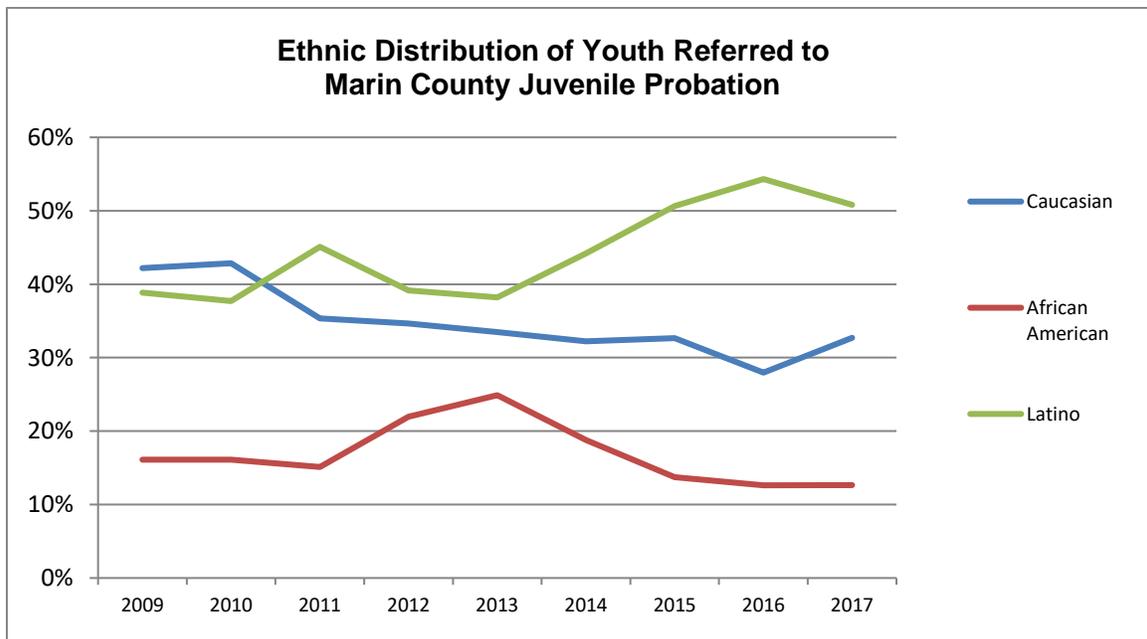
Proposition 57, approved by voters in November of 2016, returned the authority for filing juvenile cases in the adult system to the Courts. With the passage of Proposition 21 in 2000, district attorneys had the discretion to decide under certain circumstances to file a matter involving a juvenile arrest in adult court. Surprisingly, although almost all other indicators of juvenile crime have gone down, this trend line has stayed fairly consistent in Marin County. In nearly 15 years of Proposition 21's status as law, Marin County never experienced more than six minors in one year being tried as adults.

⁶ http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Juvenile_Justice/docs/DJJ_ADJDP_Monthly_Report_2017/ADP_MONTHLY_REPORT_2017.07.pdf



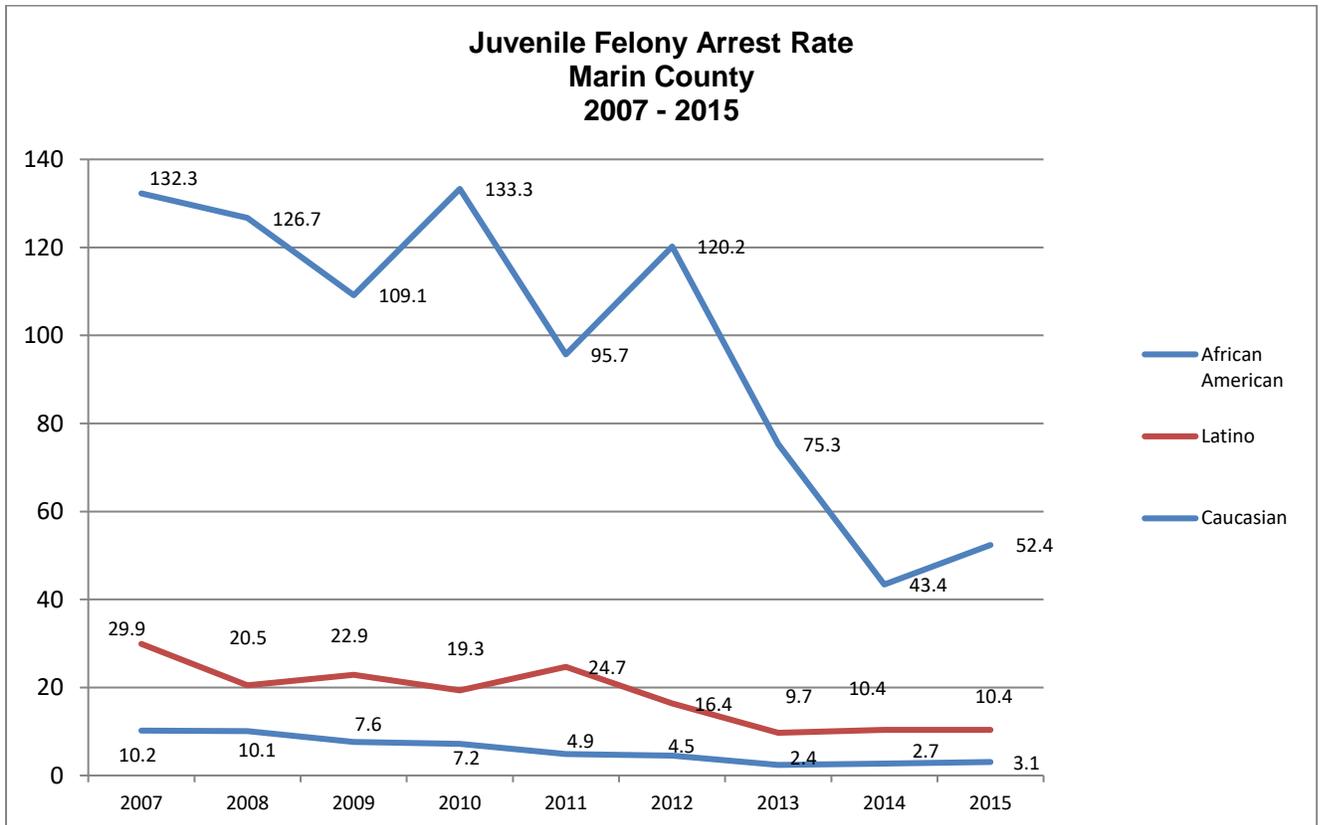
Ethnic Disparities

Despite the substantial reduction in overall numbers of youth of all ethnicities in the juvenile justice system, the disparities that have always been present are only even more pronounced today than they were in 2009. The following chart reflects the growing percentage of referrals to the Juvenile Division of the Probation Department that are of youth of color. Latino youth eclipsed the 50% mark in 2015; since that year, more than half of the referrals to the Juvenile Division have been for Latino youth.



The disparity is striking; anyone spending time in Marin County Juvenile Hall, Juvenile Court or the lobby of the Juvenile Services Center, would have a hard time believing that the overall racial distribution of the youth population of Marin County is approximately 60% Caucasian, and only 25% Latino.⁷

The next chart illustrates a comparison of the felony arrest rate for Marin County youth broken down by ethnicity from 2008 until 2015 (unfortunately, the last year that this data is available). While rates have fallen for all ethnicities, the disparity is still remarkable.⁸



⁷ <http://www.kidsdata.org/region/217/marin-county/summary#6/demographics>

⁸ <http://www.kidsdata.org/topic/166/juvenilearrest-rate-race/table#fmt=2334&loc=2,217&tf=84,79,73,67,64,46,37,16,10&ch=7,10,9,127&sortColumnId=0&sortType=asc>

Surveys of youth experiencing the juvenile justice system

In order to obtain feedback from youth who are detained in Juvenile Hall, the Probation Department began surveying youth as they were released from custody. Although there are approximately 20 questions in the survey, the core three issues that are explored in the survey are as follows:

- Feeling safe while detained
- Understanding the process of Juvenile Court
- Being treated with respect

All three of these questions have been answered in the affirmative in rates ranging between 95% to 98% since the survey was initiated in 2012.

The Probation Department has a similar system for feedback from parents of children who complete probation. Since 2013, the Department has asked:

- Whether they understood the juvenile probation process
- If they felt that their concerns were heard
- How they felt they were treated during the process

All three of these questions have been answered in the affirmative in rates between 87% to 94% since the survey was initiated in 2013.

Juvenile Justice Funding Streams

The majority of juvenile justice efforts in Marin County, and all of California, are funded through one of the following streams:

- General funds allocated at the county level
- Competitive grants
- Title IV-E
- AB1913, or Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA)
- Youth Offender Block Grant (YOBG)

The County of Marin Board of Supervisors has been a consistent supporter of the Probation Department's efforts to address juvenile delinquency. The County's strong and steady fiscal stability has meant that there have been few significant disruptions in County funding for the Probation Department over the past two decades. The Juvenile Division of the Probation Department has not been the recipient of many competitive grants offered from either the state or federal level, in large part because of the limited impact of juvenile crime as compared to other jurisdictions. The last major grant awards for the

Juvenile Division came in 2007, with three-year grants for substance abuse, mental health and disproportionate minority contact initiatives. The remainder of this section of the report will discuss the other three important funding streams: Title IV-E, JJCPA and YOBG.

Title IV-E

Title IV-E of the Social Security Act provides federal funding for administrative activities that support youth in foster care, including Extended Foster Care or care for those still living in their homes but determined to be at imminent risk for foster care. In California, these funds are provided to the Department of Social Services at the state level, which administers the funds for county agencies in both probation and health and human service departments. For the Marin County Probation Department, this is a significant source of funding that supports positions and services in the Juvenile Division. In 2012, the federal government expressed grave concerns about how some California probation departments were claiming these funds, and there was fear at one point that the federal government would rescind Title IV-E funding to probation departments entirely. As a result of an audit in 2012, the requirements for claiming these funds have become much more stringent, and the amount that Marin County has been able to claim in recent years is approximately half of what it had been.

JJCPA

Prior to 2000, programs to support juvenile justice in California counties varied widely between jurisdictions as it was primarily managed through local general fund dollars. The Schiff Cardenas Act, AKA Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention ACT (JJCPA) AKA AB1913, radically changed that in 2000 by introducing non-competitive State funding to counties to address juvenile delinquency. The funding level has been fairly consistent since the law's passing, and JJCPA has had a role in the dramatic reductions in delinquency that California has experienced. In exchange for the funding, California counties are required to:

- Develop a “Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council,” comprised of justice stakeholders, which is required to meet at least annually in order to approve any plans for the funds
- Expend funds only on programs and services which have evidence to support its effectiveness
- Provide an annual report on the following five outcome measures⁹:

⁹ This reporting requirement has changed with the passage of AB1988
https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160AB1998

- Detentions in juvenile hall
- Arrests
- Violations of probation
- Successful completion of probation
- Successful completion of community service work
- Payment of restitution to victims

Although there have been a variety of services funded through this stream in Marin County since the law's inception in 2000, the primary recipient has been the collaboration between the Probation Department and Marin County Office of Education in the Marin's Community School program. This funding provides staffing for the program, including a Deputy Probation Officer and Mental Health Practitioner, along with a variety of support services for students at the school site.

Since 2012, JJCPA funds have also been utilized to support the Youth Working for Change program. This is a vocational program for youth either in or at risk of entering the juvenile justice system. It provides soft skills training, internship opportunities and assistance with locating paid employment.

YOBG

The Youthful Offender Block Grant is the product of SB81, which was passed in 2008. SB81 was the key part of what is known as "juvenile realignment," in which the State relinquished much of its responsibilities for juvenile justice to counties. The primary impact of this legislation was to transfer the primary detention responsibility for delinquents charged with violent and serious offenses. Prior to this law, counties used the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ, formerly known as California Youth Authority) to detain youthful offenders charged with these types of offenses. In exchange for funding under YOBG, counties are now expected to either manage these offenders locally or to pay the state an annual fee for the detention. Juvenile realignment, and the resoundingly positive outcomes in juvenile justice that have taken place since its inception, is often credited for being the inspiration for the adult realignment that took place under AB109.

Marin County has utilized YOBG funding primarily to support treatment programs. The Program of Responsive Treatment and Linkages (PORTAL) is designed to support the mental health needs of youth and families in the juvenile justice system. Family Connections is a substance abuse program operated through Bay Area Community Resources and it serves those situations in which a child's delinquency is related to their use of drug and/or alcohol.

Since 2014, YOBG funds have also supported the collaboration between the Probation Department and Canal Welcome Center. Canal Welcome Center provides support for youth at three levels:

Prevention: *Consejo* is a restorative justice diversion program designed to address the needs of low risk, first time offenders from the Latino community.

Intervention: *Partners for Success* provides mentoring support to both youth and parents for families on probation

Aftercare: *Presente* is a youth leadership program designed to support youth in transition either to adulthood and/or out of the juvenile justice system. Participants meet regularly over a 10 month period in which they take part in a variety of educational, vocational and cultural activities.

Starting in 2016, YOBG funds have also paid for the Reducing Barriers to Education Success (RBES) program. Most of the youth on probation struggle with their school system, which in turn exacerbates their experience in the juvenile justice system. RBES provides support to youth who are detained in Juvenile Hall and out of their mainstream school setting, to those who are returning from foster care and need to reintegrate into their local school community, and to probation youth transitioning from a continuation school back to a mainstream school site.

A complete list of services and programs offered to youth and families is listed at the end of this document.

Marin County Probation Department Juvenile Justice Strategy

The ultimate goal of the Juvenile Division is to provide effective services to youth and families in a courteous and professional manner that helps to reduce the risk for continued delinquency. Probation Department staff seek to do this by employing evidence based practices and programs, and utilizing graduated sanctions in the least restrictive settings possible to accomplish the best interests of the child, while simultaneously ensuring public safety.

Those are flowery, “big picture” views of what the Juvenile Division of the Marin County Probation Department seeks to accomplish. What may be more relevant is not what is being attempted, but rather how it is being done. There are several philosophical approaches to juvenile justice that the Probation Department has adopted that explain that.

Emphasis on high risk youth

The Probation Department made a conscious decision several years ago to move from an “offense based” system, where the emphasis was placed mostly on the nature and impact of the crime that resulted in the referral, to one based not only on the crime but

also on the risk to recidivate that a given child presents. Research on juvenile justice issues clearly indicates that our system really can only produce deleterious effects on low risk youth; as counter-intuitive as it may seem, even doing nothing at all may be less damaging than engaging a low risk child into the juvenile justice system. The Department tries to ensure that low risk youth are referred to diversion programs and avoid formal process whenever possible.¹⁰ In order to make the determination of a child's level of risk, the Probation Department utilizes the Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT). While there are a variety of alternative assessment instruments available, the Probation Department chose this one because it:

- Allows for seamless integration with the Department's case management system known as Odyssey
- Has an automated case plan function incorporated into it

Use case plans to articulate a path to success

Nearly every probation department across California has engaged in the practice of developing case plans for youth on probation. For decades, the emphasis for supervision of juvenile offenders was about ensuring compliance with "terms and conditions" of probation. While making sure a child is in compliance with their Court orders is important, the reality is that the juvenile justice system must address more than simply those conditions if it wants to achieve true success. Research on criminal and delinquent behavior has identified eight criminogenic factors which must be addressed in order to effect change in reducing risk for recidivism:

- History of antisocial behavior
- Antisocial personality pattern
- Antisocial cognition
- Antisocial associates
- Family and/or marital
- School and/or work
- Leisure and/or recreation
- Substance abuse

Case plans are intended to articulate goals and interventions designed to address each child's individual criminogenic need(s), taking into account their level of willingness to address them, and the services available to assist with a given issue. The Juvenile Division of the Marin County Probation Department has been using case plans but still has work to do to ensure that the document is the primary driver of supervision contacts and approach.

¹⁰ While the vast majority of low risk youth perpetrate minor crimes, there are situations in which a child who presents minimal risk to re-offend commits a high profile crime. These are some of our most challenging cases to deal with

Emphasize accountability, treatment and opportunity

Several years ago, the Juvenile Division made the intentional step of increasing the scope of its purview beyond simply the accountability issues traditionally associated with probation departments. While holding youth accountable is a core function of what the Division does, there are other issues that need to be addressed in order to support youth and families to avoid further involvement with the justice system. In addition to providing accountability services such as drug testing, restitution collection, and addressing violations of probation, the Probation Department also promotes rehabilitation by providing a variety of programs to address mental health, family issues and substance abuse. The Probation Department also acknowledges the fact that youth need to have access to healthy alternatives to delinquency, and support to take advantage of them. For that reason, the Department has invested in a jobs program, mentors and educational support. On a case by case basis, Deputy Probation Officers are also able to access resources to support youth who want to take part in pro-social activities, such as lessons in sports or music, as long as there is a clear connection between the activity and a case plan goal.

Tracking outcome measures

The Probation Department was one of the first Marin County departments to adopt the “managing for results” framework. This was introduced by the County in 2006 and it emphasized the importance of first identifying, and then tracking, key measures to assess effectiveness. As a result of that early adoption to this approach, the Probation Department has a robust capacity for tracking data. For the Juvenile Division of the Department, the key measures being tracked and the outcomes are shown below.

SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF PROBATION	
2012	90.3%
2013	90.0%
2014	90.2%
2015	86.7%
2016	83.1%
2017	82.2%

ADJUDICATION WHILE UNDER SUPERVISION	
2012	20.8%
2013	11.6%
2014	16.0%
2015	12.0%

2016	15.2%
2017	14.7%

ADJUDICATION WITHIN 2 YEARS OF CASE CLOSING	
2012	23.8%
2013	16.9%
2014	24.7%
2015	22.0%

The adjudication data reflect rates of recidivism, both while under supervision during a term of probation and two years after completion of a probation grant. While recidivism is a long-used measure of tracking effectiveness of a justice system, its use has severe limitations, particularly when employed to draw comparisons between jurisdictions:

In order to have an adjudication, there needs to be an arrest. Response criteria for police agencies can vary widely, meaning that those jurisdictions with police departments that respond to low level crimes are more likely to have higher rates of recidivism. Marin County, with 12 different police agencies, has a greater presence of police than in many other communities. This means that Marin’s recidivism rate may be higher simply because the police are more likely to respond to events.

Recidivism rates may vary as laws change. The recent spate of ballot propositions which reduced both the severity and the penalties associated with some crimes will impact recidivism rates.

Recidivism is what is known as a “discrete” variable; it either occurred or it did not (in statistical jargon, it is identified as “0” or “1”). This is in contrast to a “continuous” variable, which measures a range. The limitation of recidivism is that it only shows whether a person was adjudicated for a subsequent offense; it does not capture whether a person has changed, and whether their risk for recidivism has been reduced.

The Probation Department believes a better measure of effectiveness is to assess a child’s risk to recidivate at the entry point and then re-assess it after a period supervision and interventions. Ideally, Probation Department staff are addressing the primary criminogenic factors listed on page 15 and reducing the potential for the young person to commit another offense. This screen shot of a query from the risk needs instrument

shows that the two major criminogenic factors for Marin County youth assessed over the last three years are anti-social personality and criminal associates¹¹.

Criminogenic Needs Report
Evaluate your agency's top need areas for assessments completed between 1/1/2015 and 11/8/2017



Criminogenic Needs Report

This report shows the frequency that different need areas are selected as the top need for all of the subjects in the system, and can be used as a starting point for evaluating the necessary treatment options available to your agency.

This report includes the most recent completed assessment for each subject, only indicates need areas, and does not consider Noble's stabilizing factors.

This is a point in time report, and reflects the current top needs in your agency. As new assessments are performed on subjects, this data will change.

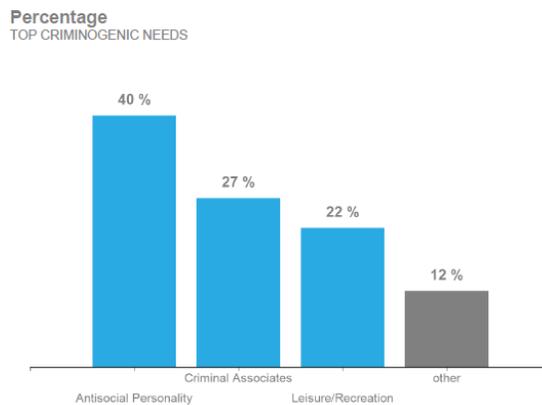


FIGURE 1
■ Top 3 Criminogenic Needs
■ All other Criminogenic Needs

The Department will begin tracking pre and post risk scores for these factors to get an idea of its effectiveness on reducing risk for recidivism.

¹¹ While leisure and recreation is a frequent factor identified, addressing it does not have the same impact as the other two, as it is not as strong a contributor to recidivism

As was discussed in an earlier section of this report, there are a variety of contributors to outcomes in the justice system, some of which are well beyond a probation department's ability to control. The statistics provided above need to be understood within the limitations of those factors.

In addition, qualitative feedback is important to obtain as well. As discussed earlier, the Department seeks feedback from parents of youth on probation on a regular basis. The Department also conducts periodic focus groups of stakeholders, youth and parents to get an idea of how our services are perceived. The following section (pages 20-27) of this report discusses the results from recent focus group conversations with stakeholders, and it was prepared by the Cristando House Consulting Group (this section is formatted with a different font to distinguish it from this report).

Marin County Probation Department

Comprehensive Multi-Agency Juvenile Justice Plan Update

Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Groups

In July and August of 2017, Crisando House, Inc. conducted eight individual stakeholder interviews as part of the Marin County Probation Department's update to their multi-agency juvenile justice plan. In addition to the individual interviews, two focus groups were conducted. The first focus group consisted of Marin Co. Probation, Juvenile Division employees and the second was with representatives from various community-based organizations which work closely with the department. A list of interviewees and focus group participants is included as an attachment.

In both the interviews and focus groups, participants were queried about areas of strength and concern regarding juvenile justice issues in the county. The three areas of concentration of the Marin County Probation Department (**Accountability, Treatment and Opportunity**) were examined. In addition, emerging juvenile justice issues were identified and discussed. This report summarizes these interviews and focus groups. Twenty-three (23) specific suggestions and recommendations identified by interview and focus group participants to enhance services and strengthen the juvenile justice system in Marin County are documented in the sections listed above. Because of the frequency it was mentioned in focus groups and interviews, an additional section on **Collaboration** is also included.

Accountability

During the focus group with probation staff there was consensus that the discretion and flexibility DPO's have regarding holding juvenile probationers accountable is a strength of the department. This discretion allows DPO's to modify their approach based on the juvenile and the case and assists the department in achieving more positive outcomes.

Multiple respondents indicated depending on the individual probation officer, the amount of contact (making time to meet, supervision, returning calls and support) a juvenile and their family has with the department during probation, varies greatly. The development of some type of probation orientation for juveniles and their parents was identified by both focus groups as a way to help juveniles successfully complete probation. This orientation would include information about what services, support and treatment options are available to them. In addition, many participants in the community based organizations focus group indicated the department should provide additional assistance in successfully completing probation to juveniles who do not have adequate parental support. In both the focus group with community based organizations and in some of the one-on-one interviews with stakeholders there was uncertainty on how the decision was made to put juveniles on an administrative caseload.

Several law enforcement partners asked the question, “has the pendulum swung too far from accountability toward support?” Some local law enforcement officers feel they are dealing with the same juveniles, many of whom are on probation, over and over again. Many of these juveniles are given second and third chances and at times the perception is there is a lack of consequences for them. One law enforcement officer recounted multiple juveniles they have encountered who said, “my P.O. is cool, they won’t do anything.” This suggests a disconnect between some elements of the law enforcement community and some of the supervision and treatment methodologies of the department. The probation department should consider conducting short training sessions at patrol briefings to explain emergent treatment methodologies for juveniles and open more effective communication channels between probation and local police departments.

Accountability of parents came up frequently in both the focus groups and the one-on-one interviews. Problems at home, parental substance abuse and/or mental health issues are often present and treatment options or other resources are offered. However, because participation is voluntary, many parents chose not to take advantage of these programs or services. The question was asked if the courts could make participation in these programs mandatory for some parents.

Suggestions and Recommendations

1. Develop a probation orientation for juveniles and their families
2. Assess the feasibility of the probation department providing additional assistance in successfully completing probation to juveniles who do not have adequate parental support
3. Probation department to consider conducting patrol briefing trainings at local police departments on supervision and treatment methodologies and open more effective lines of communication between probation and local police departments
4. Assess the feasibility and support of the courts making parental participation in treatment programs mandatory

Treatment

There are a variety of both substance abuse and mental health treatment options available in Marin County. However, in both the interviews and the focus groups most of the discussion was focused on the services which are lacking and the barriers to accessing treatment. The lack of a residential mental health program for juveniles was brought up in almost every conversation. Juveniles needing residential psychiatric care are held in Unit B at Marin General until a bed opens up in San Francisco, Vacaville or Sacramento.

Substance abuse, in particular marijuana and opioids, was identified by many as one of the biggest juvenile justice issues in the county. Several participants indicated the juvenile substance abuse rate in Marin County is very high when compared to the national average and the age when

juveniles first use drugs is much younger than in many other counties. The relaxed attitude about substance use and abuse by some parents and the recent changes in marijuana laws has only exacerbated the problem. While there are different substance abuse treatment options in Marin County, several respondents indicated there is not enough variety in the treatment methodologies. Probation staff also identified a need for additional treatment options for anger issues.

During the focus group with probation staff, frustration with the process and bureaucracy of obtaining treatment for juveniles on their caseload was expressed. One probation officer said, “I have to jump through one hoop after another, I’m just trying to get treatment for a kid.” Probation staff also felt the development of a regularly updated treatment resource guide would be a beneficial resource for both the community and the department.

The cultural perceptions some parents have of mental illness and mental health treatment was identified as a barrier to treatment for some juveniles in the county and targeted community education on mental health issues was suggested. Additionally, several interview and focus group participants indicated immigration status and fear of deportation are also barriers to obtaining needed services for some Hispanic families.

The Parent Project put on by the San Rafael Police Department was frequently referred to positively and is seen by many as a very effective program. Multiple participants would like to see the Parent Project expanded both in the number of locations where it is offered around the county and in the number of sessions conducted each year. In the focus group with probation staff, there was consensus there needs to be more services geared toward parents, including additional treatment options, education and employment assistance.

In order to assist families in navigating the probation process, the creation of a support group for parents with children on probation and the development of a one-to-two page services guide were suggested. The services guide would include wrap around services, substance abuse and mental health treatment options and parenting resources/classes.

Suggestions and Recommendations

1. Probation staff should work with treatment providers to ensure adequate services and treatment options are available for juveniles with anger issues
2. Develop and regularly update a Marin County treatment and resources guide
3. Partner with community based organizations to develop and deliver community education on mental health issues
4. Consider the feasibility of creating a support group for parents who have children on probation
5. Create a brief probation services guide describing wrap around services, treatment options and parenting resources and classes

6. Assess partnering with the San Rafael PD to increase the frequency and expand the locations of the Parent Project
7. Partner with community based organizations to provide more services geared toward parents, including additional treatment options, education and employment assistance

Opportunity

Several effective current programs were identified and discussed. These included, Working for Change, Girls Stepping Up For Change, the Ranger Cadet Program and Camp Chance put on by the SRPD. Girls Stepping Up For Change is seen as such a positive program that everyone who was familiar with it asked how do we create something similar for boys. Probation department staff indicated Working for Change could have a greater impact if the program was expanded in both size and scope. The number of paid internships offered through Marin Employment Connection could also be increased. Participants would like to see the Ranger Cadet Program either offered on a continuous basis or at least twice a year instead of just once a year. Participants also felt the mentoring program offered through the Canal Welcoming Center should be expanded.

Probation staff discussed the subject of youth leadership and how the department should identify methods and strategies to get probation graduates to assist in accomplishing the department's mission. Utilizing them as guest speakers or mentors in some capacity were both identified as possible methods. Staff also indicated enhanced life skills training should be offered at the juvenile hall.

The majority of focus group and interview participants indicated there is a lack of pro-social recreational activities for kids in Marin County. Several interviewees went so far as to say, "there's not a lot for kids to do here, except get in trouble." The NIMBY (not in my backyard) attitude of some county residents further exacerbates the issue. Some residents are quick to call local law enforcement if kids are skateboarding in the street or playing basketball in the parks after dark. Many of the recreational/enrichment activities and athletic teams in the county are not free. This further limits the opportunities available to juveniles from families without the financial means to pay registration fees. One interviewee said, "there's a gap in opportunity, unless you're privileged." In contrast, two participants made reference to recreation leagues and municipal parks and recreation programs that suffer from a lack of participation and interest. During the focus group with probation staff, it was suggested the department create a list of the extra-curricular/development opportunities available in the county and appoint a centralized person to update it on a regular basis.

In many of the one-on-one interviews and both focus groups the lack of extra curricular activities or an athletics program at the community school was brought up. Participants understand this is not an issue the probation department can change on its own; a program to allow community school

students to participate in athletics will involve many stakeholders including the league and the MCOE. While many think extra curricular activities and an athletics program at the community school are excellent initiatives for the probation department to champion, several interviewees strongly disagree, saying, “there has to be consequences, you lose privileges when you screw up.”

Enhanced vocational training and education was repeatedly identified as a significant need in Marin County. It was reported there are not many options for vocational training in the county and some of the programs offered are inaccessible to probation department clients based on either cost or transportation issues. Probation department staff believe the department should offer higher end educational and vocational opportunities in the juvenile hall. Working with the MCOE and the College of Marin to develop additional vocational training opportunities that prepare participants for the jobs of today was identified as a needed priority of the probation department. Several interview and focus group participants asked if mandated vocational training for juveniles or their families was possible.

Suggestions and Recommendations

1. Assess the feasibility of developing a program similar to Girls Stepping Up for Change for males
2. Examine methods to expand employment support and development (Working for Change and Marin Employment Connection)
3. Consider expansion of other successful programs including the Ranger Cadet Program and the Canal Welcome Center mentoring program
4. Identify methods and strategies to get probation graduates to assist in accomplishing the department’s mission
5. Provide higher end educational opportunities, vocational training and life skills in the juvenile hall
6. Develop a list of extra curricular/development opportunities in Marin Co. and appoint a probation department staff member to regularly update it
7. Partner with MCOE and College of Marin to develop additional vocational training opportunities that prepare participants for today’s jobs and are accessible to probation department clients

Collaboration

Interviewees and focus group participants identified collaboration as a major strength in the juvenile justice system in Marin County. The probation department was identified as the bridge between various governmental and community based organizations working in this arena and as the leader in championing this spirit of collaboration. Several participants commended the probation department for their commitment to involve stakeholders in a meaningful way. The relationships and trust developed over the years, allows stakeholders to effectively deal with issues and concerns between one another when they arise. It was stated many times that in the Marin County juvenile justice system, “it’s not about us; it’s about the kids and their families.”

Despite being identified as a major, if not the major strength of the juvenile justice system in Marin County, nearly every participant felt collaboration could and should be enhanced. Frequent communication breakdowns between treatment providers, parents and minors were reported. Enhancing the relationship between CFS and the probation department, especially in regards to dual status youth, is a work in progress but several participants indicate significant progress has been made. While there appears to be a strong partnership between probation and the Marin Co. Office of Education, several opportunities to strengthen the relationships between probation and the schools were identified. The first was between probation, the courts and schools where, “small steps could strengthen relationships and increase alignment.” The other was working to develop partnerships with the 19 different school districts in the county. Based on the feedback from some of the individual interviews and the focus group with community based organizations, there appears to be a clash of cultures between some of the CBO’s and some law enforcement partners (municipal police depts. and the sheriff’s office).

Suggestions and Recommendations

1. Improve communication between treatment providers, parents and juveniles to further strengthen collaboration
2. Strengthen relationships and enhance alignment between probation, the courts and the schools
3. Develop partnerships between probation and the 19 individual school districts in Marin County

Emerging Juvenile Justice Issues

During the focus groups and one-on-one interviews numerous emerging juvenile justice issues in Marin County were identified and discussed.

Trauma

It was reported the number of juveniles the probation department is working with who have experienced trauma either personally or by witnessing traumatic events has increased. However, some of the participants indicated that due to an increased focus on trauma and trauma informed care, we might not actually be seeing more juveniles who have experienced trauma; we may just be better at identifying it.

Human Trafficking

Everyone who spoke of human trafficking acknowledges it is happening in Marin County. It’s coming over both the Richmond/San Rafael and the Golden Gate bridges and there have been cases of kids recruiting other kids into sex trafficking. Many participants indicated the significance of this issue in Marin County is not currently known.

Gender Identification/Diversity

Gender identification is likely to have an increasing impact on the juvenile justice system in Marin County. Additional services may need to be developed in order to ensure the probation department and other players in the juvenile justice system are adequately meeting the needs of all constituents. Additionally, for the probation department, there are issues around policies, procedures and training regarding things like showers, room sharing and in-take processing.

While many of the juveniles on probation are African American or Latino, the majority of probation officers are not. There was nearly unanimous agreement both the probation department and the schools need to do a better job of recruiting and retaining employees who look like the kids they work with.

Suggestions and Recommendations

1. Recruit and retain a more culturally diverse workforce and provide appropriate cultural competency/diversity training to staff

Social Media

One school resource officer identified calls dealing in some way with online bullying as the number one call for service for all SRO's in the county. Many participants feel there is a need for more online safety and digital citizenship training.

Suggestions and Recommendations

1. Partner with local law enforcement and community based organizations to develop and deliver additional online safety and digital citizenship training to county youth

Income Inequality/Economic Disparity

While Marin County has some extremely wealthy residents, income inequality has always been an issue. The rising cost of living and increasing economic disparity is a significant juvenile justice issue. It was reported one in four kids in the county are now considered low income. Probation staff indicated the cost of living and economic disparity is impacting current probation clients and leading to an increase in new clients. Many parents are working two jobs or extremely long hours in order to make ends meet which leads to a lack of parental supervision at home. As was identified in the section on opportunity, this

income inequality leads to a gap in opportunity between those who can afford to participate in various recreational and extra curricular activities and those who cannot. Several participants who work closely with kids in the schools indicated “the gap between the have’s and have not’s is getting larger and the kids are becoming much more aware of their social status.”

Multi-Agency Juvenile Justice Plan Update Interviewees

Diana Bishop

Chief of Police
San Rafael Police Dept.

Mary Jane Burke

Superintendent of Schools
Marin Co. Office of Education

Mike Daly

Chief Probation Officer
Marin Co. Probation Department

Cassandra Edwards

Deputy District Attorney
Marin Co. District Attorney's Office

Mike Howard

Lieutenant
Novato Police Dept.

Rebecca Kuga

Program Supervisor Youth Services Bureau
San Rafael Police Dept.

Josie Sanguinetti

School Resource Officer
Marin Co. Sheriff's Office

Beverly Wood

Superior Court Judge of California County
of Marin

Multi-Agency Juvenile Justice Plan Update Focus Groups

Marin Co. Probation Department Staff (focus group #1):

1. Deputy Probation Officer Kevin Coleman
2. Probation Supervisor Janene Conner
3. Senior Probation Officer Rosie De Alvarez
4. Deputy Probation Officer Tony Raitano
5. Mental Health Unit Supervisor Jeana Reynolds
6. Deputy Probation Officer Jaime Torres
7. Public Health Nurse Nita Lagleva Gibson (Health and Human Services)

Juvenile Justice System Stakeholders (focus group #2):

1. Jorge Alfonso, Seneca
2. Olivia Beltran, Canal Welcome Center
3. Don Carney, YMCA Youth Court
4. Carol Farrer, Marin Co. Public Defender's Office
5. Jazzy Gerraty, YMCA Youth Court
6. Laura Kantorowski, Bay Area Community Resources
7. Dana Pepp, Marin Co. Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Commission
8. Larkin Sealy, Seneca

Conclusion

It is curious that just as juvenile crime approaches record lows in California, the legislature has taken a keen interest in the area. Since 2012, there have been several substantive laws that have passed, some through the ballot initiative process and others through the legislature, that are having effects on how juvenile justice operates in our state. The best examples of this have been transformations in foster care, sealing of juvenile records and changes in penalties associated with crimes, particularly marijuana. As practitioners in the field, it is gratifying that our profession has the attention of the California legislature. At the same time, it is at times frustrating to see how fragmented these efforts at reform have been; the scope of the changes would have been better suited to a thoughtful, deliberate, and informed process of juvenile justice overhaul and reform, rather than an ad hoc and incremental progression of laws and ballot initiatives.

However frustrating the implementation of these new laws can be to some seasoned practitioners, there are several reasons to rejoice rather than to complain. First and foremost, these reforms are coming at a time when juvenile justice has capacity to absorb and implement them. With the number of referrals down across the State of California, juvenile justice systems in most jurisdictions have at least some hope of having time and resources to dedicate to implementation.¹² In addition, several years of positive economic times have meant that funding streams have remained constant. Implementing these reforms at a time when workload was too high, and resources too few, would have been disastrous.

A second reason to be encouraged is that the spirit of most of these reforms is to roll back the punitive elements of the juvenile justice system that took root in the 1990s and continued through most of the 2000s. Reducing penalties, eliminating fees, increasing ease to have records sealed, creating more barriers to handling children in the adult system, passing regulations that increase voice of families in the system process: all of these legislative steps reflect the ever moving pendulum away from punishment and back towards what the Juvenile Court was originally established to do, which was to ensure the best interests of the child. While some may believe it is going too far, few can debate that this pendulum shift is at least occurring during a record era in juvenile crime reduction. It would have been much more challenging to implement these reforms during a time when crime, and particularly violent crime, was on the rise. What remains to be seen is how these reforms will look if crime spikes again.

¹² This is not true for all departments. Most California probation departments, including Marin County, have had to transfer resources, including staff, from their juvenile divisions to adult to address increased workload in that area

The third, and most important, reason why readers should have confidence in this process of modifying how juvenile justice is delivered is because of the many advantages that Marin County presents in such an endeavor. Aside from the obvious ones related to resources listed above, there are other, more contextual, explanations that should provide a sense of optimism about this jurisdiction's ability to deliver. Relationships among staff in the important entities involved in Marin's juvenile justice system are excellent, particularly when one considers what those are like in other jurisdictions. The stability of staffing, little need to squabble over resources, and a common orientation have all contributed to create positive, effective working relationships in which County of Marin residents benefit. In addition, the jurisdiction has a strong history of successful implementation of the various reforms over the past two decades (juvenile justice realignment, AB109, implementation of grants that result in permanent programming, etc.). This experience creates a confidence and expectation that the County of Marin will be able to meet the challenges it faces in its juvenile justice system, whatever they may be.

Report Recommendations

- 1. Maintain strategy of allocating resources towards youth determined to be at high risk for recidivism, and providing services for accountability, treatment and opportunity to all youth referred to the juvenile justice system when appropriate*

The Probation Department's strategy of emphasizing its efforts with youth at high risk for recidivism remains sensible and appropriate. With access to both research which clearly makes the case against working with low risk youth, and a variety of programs that offer diversion opportunities, Marin County's strategy to emphasize resources on high risk youth is wise. In addition, the Probation Department's efforts to address issues of accountability, treatment and opportunities to support a child's pro-social orientation, are innovative and essential. The living situation of many of the youth and families involved in the juvenile justice system are precarious at best in many circumstances, and having a range of ways to intervene (beyond simply issues of compliance with probation terms and conditions) is extremely important.

- 2. Re-initiate efforts to address the issue of ethnic disparities in juvenile justice*

This report further reinforces the need to address ethnic disparities in Marin's juvenile justice system. From 2009 through 2014, the Probation Department began the work to develop ideas for reducing ethnic disparities, but more needs to be done. In that phase, the focus was on raising of awareness of this issue, providing training on its causes, and implementing several programs to address it. Despite those efforts, the disparities have persisted and Marin County needs to re-consider how to address them. While the overall numbers of youth of all ethnic backgrounds entering the system has reduced, the disparity has actually grown. This issue is too great to ignore any longer.

- 3. Assess viability of some of the suggestions from the focus group process, including:*

- Review span of services (including services for parents) and identify gaps*
- Increase opportunities for recreational activities for at-risk youth*
- Develop services that address criminogenic factors*
- Enhance families' understanding of both Juvenile Court and juvenile probation process*
- Conduct focus groups of youth and families to obtain their input on value of services*

As part of the process for completion of this report, the Probation Department contracted with the criminal justice consulting group Cristando House to conduct a series of focus groups and key stakeholder interviews to inform this document. While some of the feedback was at times contradictory or not in line with themes of the existing juvenile justice system, there were several that were well worth exploring. It would be beneficial to conduct a review of those ideas and consider the feasibility of their implementation, as long as they are consistent with the approaches described above.

4. Take advantage of opportunities to conduct formal evaluations of programming to assess effectiveness

Conducting formal evaluations of programs and services is the ideal practice for any system. Unfortunately, such evaluations are both expensive and time-consuming. It is strongly recommended that Marin County take advantage of any opportunity to undergo evaluations of its programs and services whenever possible. In absence of funding being able to conduct such work, the County should attempt to invest in efforts that are based upon models with established research to support them.

Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC) Members

Chief Probation Officer Michael Daly

Sheriff Robert Doyle

District Attorney Edward Berberian

Public Defender Jose Varela

Chief of Police Diana Bishop

Marin County Office of Education Mary Jane Burke

Health and Human Services Director Grant Colfax

Superior Court Judge Beverly Wood

Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Commission Dana Pepp

Marin Treatment Center Brian Slattery

SERVICES AVAILABLE FOR YOUTH IN MARIN COUNTY JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Consejo

Community residents trained in restorative practices work with youth and families referred to the juvenile justice system for first time, low level offenses. The program hopes to expand to provide conflict resolution services to a variety of agencies and situations, not just juvenile justice

Marin City Recreation Center

In collaboration with Marin City's Community Services District, the Probation Department has provided funding to expand the services available at the Marin City Recreational Center for all youth

Youth Court

Administered by the Marin YMCA, the Youth Court is an intervention based on restorative justice principles that allows youth who commit minor offenses to face a jury and legal counsel consisting entirely of other teens

Ranger Cadet Program

Administered by the National Park Service, this is a one-week, 40 hour cadet program designed to introduce at-risk youth to the career of a Park Ranger. Part first line law enforcement, part search and rescue, and part EMT, this is an exciting career and participants get to find out what is involved in this line of work. They learn a variety of skills related to the job, including teamwork, how to use a GPS system to map coordinates, rappelling, and CPR/First Aid. In addition, participants get to explore the local parks in Marin County which are administered by the Park Service.

Girls Stepping Up for Change

Girls Stepping Up for Change offers participants the opportunity to meet one afternoon a week with staff of the Probation Department and engage in a variety of healthy and physical activities. In addition to taking part in regular physical exercise and learning healthy habits around diet and self-care, the participants also take part in periodic community service activities and field trips.

Alcohol Justice Summer Camp

Probation Department funds support Alcohol Justice to operate a two week summer camp for youth from the Canal neighborhood. Aside from enjoying recreational opportunities, youth also take part in educational activities designed to raise awareness about the impact of drugs and alcohol in their community.

Career Explorers Program

Probation Department funds support Health & Human Services' summer program which provides internship opportunities with a variety of departments within the County of Marin. Youth are provided with stipends, training and support as they complete the 10 week internship program. This program is in alignment with the County's Five Year Plan, which seeks to cultivate a diverse, local workforce for the County to draw from for future staff.

Mentors

The Probation Department has contracted with the Canal Welcome Center to assist Latino youth to successfully complete probation. The primary tool used to provide that assistance is a cadre of mentors, who work with the youth their families, and the Deputy Probation Officer to ensure successful completion of probation terms and conditions.

Reducing Barriers to Education Success (RBES)

Many youth in the juvenile justice system struggle with their education, before, during and after their experiences of being on probation. RBES provides case management support specifically around education issues that impact a child's probation. Whether it is a child in foster care returning from a placement outside of the county, a child in an alternative education school, or a child with an extended detention in Juvenile Hall, RBES staff support a child's educational needs and ensure they not suffer as a result of being on probation.

Youth Working for Change

An Employment Development Counselor works with youth referred to the juvenile justice system to assist them to obtain employment. Services include vocational assessments, job search support, stipended internships and subsidized employment.

PORTAL

Mental Health Practitioners work with youth and families referred to the juvenile justice system and who are confronting issues involving family conflict and/or mental illness.

Youth Empowerment Services (YES)

A full-service partnership program for high risk youth who are involved with juvenile justice or alternative schools. The program provides culturally sensitive mental health support, intensive case management services, and psychiatric care. YES collaborates with a host of other social service agencies, and uses strength-based approaches to support families

Drug and Alcohol Services

Through contracts with Huckleberry Teen Health Program and Bay Area Community Resources, youth and families receive drug and alcohol services at little to no cost. ReStart is a short term residential treatment program offered at Sunnyhills' campus in San Anselmo. It provides 30 – 60 day services for youth in need of residential care.

Seneca Wraparound Services

The focus of these services is to provide family-centered, individualized, and culturally relevant and strength based support to families referred to both the social services and juvenile justice systems. The goal of the program is to reduce the need to require youth to be placed in group home settings, and to provide support that will allow them to remain with their families and to be both healthy and safe.

Pathways

A structured, intensive probation supervision program in which the Deputy Probation Officer and treatment staff conduct frequent reviews of youth on probation who are experiencing involvement with the juvenile justice system primarily as a result of a treatment need. The program involves a collaborative and coordinated approach in which staff work with the Juvenile Court to develop sanctions and rewards for a child's progress.

Marin's Community School/Phoenix Academy

Marin's primary continuation school for students who have not been able to be successful in traditional school settings. The curriculum has been modified to be "project-based," and is integrated with internships to provide real world learning opportunities.

Community Service Work

Nearly all youth placed on probation are required to perform community service work. For those youth with need of special assistance to ensure they will complete this requirement, the Probation Department has access to a program which will help a child to identify an interest, locate a provider and ensure completion of their hours

Presente !

Canal Welcome Center operates a leadership development program for Latino youth in Marin County. This program provides a stipend for 12 youth to participate in a variety of recreational, vocational and educational activities in their community.

AB12

Assembly Bill 12, also known as "Extended Foster Care," provides financial support to young people who exit from foster care and do not return to their families. In this voluntary program, young people who are employed, enrolled in school, and/or in a treatment program of some kind, receive monthly checks to support them as they transition from the structure of a foster care setting to independence.

Independent Living Skills

This program is operated by Alternative Family Services and it provides a wide range of support for young people who have exited foster care and are transitioning to independence. Services includes providing vocational, educational and financial literacy support.

Marin Youth (MY) Home

The Probation Department, in collaboration with Seneca Services, operates a specialized home in Marin County for youth who present little to no threat to public safety but require foster care. The program will offer intensive services and support to youth to allow them to remain in their community and prepare for their independence, and often serves as a "step-down" for youth returning to the community from a group home. This program will be available for young people either through AB 12 or who are placed in foster care as wards for delinquent acts.

Re-Entry Coordinator

A Mental Health Practitioner is dedicated to assisting in the return of foster care youth to their community upon completion of a placement program. The tasks include arranging services, removing barriers, and assisting in whatever needs to be done to ensure a young person's return is successful.