



Probation Juvenile Justice Reform Efforts

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF PROBATION

September 2015 Report

Non-Delinquent Status Youth

“In an era when states are rethinking their approaches to youth who commit crime, scaling back system responses to non-criminal behaviors is a necessary first step and can help lay the foundation for a less intrusive and more effective juvenile justice system.”

Status Offender Reform Center

With the passage of LB561 and all status youth supervision under the Administrative Office of Probation the approach in working with these youth and families must be different from the delinquent youth. Additionally, with passage of LB484 it is imperative that probation have a direct focus on these youth that come to the juvenile justice system once a County Attorney has detailed all other options have been exhausted. *Therefore, this month’s reform document details the planned implementation over the next year to impact success with anticipated outcomes.*

Intake and Detention Alternatives

- Created a Runaway

Questionnaire for in-state youth who are brought to intake with specialized questions:

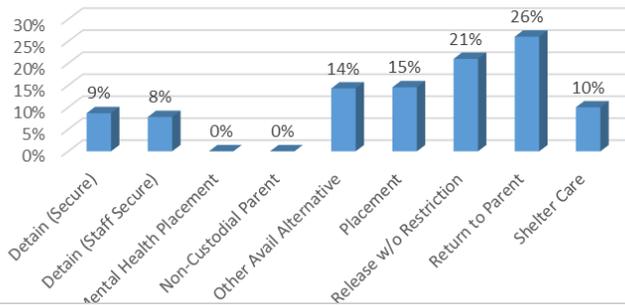
- Why did you leave and how long have you been away from home?
- Were you abused at home, or are you afraid to return home?
- Has anyone tried to hurt you while away?
- Do you have someone to talk to at home or school?

- Intake screening will be focused on immediate interventions needed to stabilize the youth and family with continued emphasis on less restrictive alternatives.

Pre-adjudication/Predisposition and Investigation

- Status youth specific assessment tools have been researched with plans for a pilot using the “JIFF” which is a guide to evaluating areas of service needs. Assessment tools benefit both a probation officer, as well as youth and family and assists in identifying mental health or substance use needs and generate individualized goals.
- Additionally, the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument (MAYSI-2) will also be implemented to identify special mental health needs requiring immediate attention.
- The Predisposition Investigation (PDI) has been enhanced to include status youth specific questions.
- Pre-Adjudication/Pre-Disposition supervision and support is focused on immediate service utilization with the goal of diverting youth from the juvenile justice system. Focused services include mediation and immediate case planning.

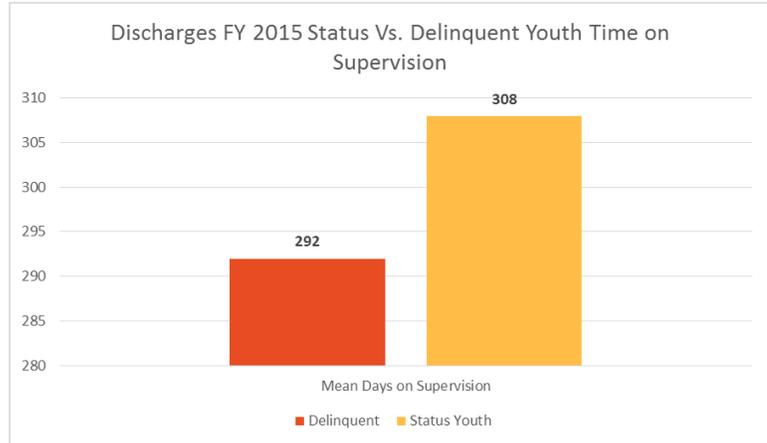
Intakes by Decision March 2015 through Sept 2015 by % Status Offenders



*Detention would only be used for Status Youth per the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) exclusion for out-of-state runaway per the Interstate Compact for Juveniles (ICJ) rules.

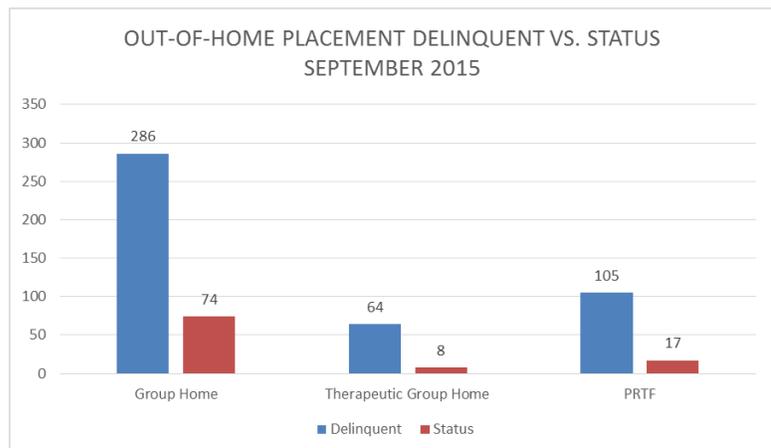
Case Management and Services

- Case Management will be focused on Standards of Supervision that support status youth, including:
 - Enhanced Family Team Meetings
 - High school engagement for truancy youth.
 - Increased use of community based programming
 - Strength-based gender specific supervision due to over representation of female status youth nationwide, as well as in Nebraska.
- Specialized Probation Officers trained in “Positive Youth Development” curriculum and how to identify sparks and become a “Sparks Champion” for the youth and family.
- Increase utilization of skill-based groups including the Rural Improvement for Schooling and Employment (RISE) Program.



Reentry

- Status youth may require the use of an out-of-home placement on rare occasions. Individualized Transition Planning (ITP) will occur upon placement.
- Placement utilization will be consistently monitored by the Probation Officer to ensure correct dosage of treatment.
- Family engagement will include:
 - Exit upon entry philosophy which requires planning for the youth to return home and back to their community immediately upon placement outside of the family home.



Anticipated Outcome

- Case Management guided by an appropriate assessment will decrease the length of time on probation for non-delinquent status offense youth and increase early probation termination.
- Collaboration with community programs will decrease the use of congregate care (a licensed or approved setting that provides 24 hour care for youth in a large group setting which may include group homes or residential treatment facilities) for non-delinquent status youth.
- Applying appropriate strategies in case management as supported by the national standards with the youth and family as equal partners will decrease the requests of technical violations for non-delinquent status youth.

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