

Washington State Three-Year State Plan

Description of the Issue: Analyses of Juvenile Delinquency Problems

The Washington State Partnership Council on Juvenile Justice (PCJJ), Washington's State Advisory Group, plays a strong proactive role providing collaborative leadership and direction and recommends innovative juvenile justice reforms and best practices for implementation. The PCJJ and the Office of Juvenile Justice (OJJ) contract and collaborate with the Washington State Center for Court Research for comprehensive juvenile justice data analysis and key findings to produce our biennial Juvenile Justice Report to the Governor and the Legislature. This ongoing collaboration results in the biennial analysis of youth risk, needs, detention use, racial and ethnic disparities, and service engagement that facilitate goals setting as well as policy and program recommendations.

Additionally, an analysis of Racial and Ethnic Disparities at the five key juvenile justice system decision points was also conducted to inform this three-year plan. The Racial and Ethnic Disparities Action Plan, submitted as required, reflects several of the same goals and outcomes outlined below as the PCJJ's highest commitment is to the reduction of the impact of Racial and Ethnic Disparities on youth involved in Washington's juvenile justice system. We believe our local communities hold the solutions and this belief is clearly evident in where the PCJJ aims its funding, advocacy and collaborative efforts.

Our most recent analyses identify following:

- (i) Racial and ethnic disparities continue to persist across the juvenile justice system, starting with arrests and resulting in disparities increasing the farther a young person is moved into the system. (Figures 1 & 2).

- (ii) As practices ceased to limit the spread of COVID-19, the number of arrests and legal system involvement are rebounding though they have not surpassed pre-pandemic levels. (Figures 3 & 4).
- (iii) Missing ethnicity data from the police and the courts that results in undercounts of Latino youth and over-counts of White youth in the juvenile justice system (Figure 5).

Figure 1: Key Juvenile Justice System Decision Points—YOC Compared to White Youth

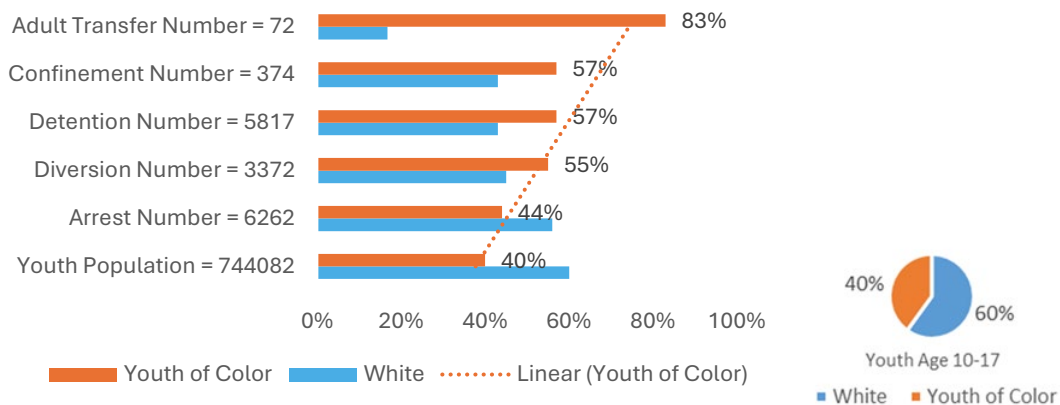


Figure 2: Key Juvenile Justice System Decision Points—by Race & Ethnicity

Washington State FY 2023		White	Black	American Indian	NHAAPI	Hispanics	Other	Total
Population Data	Number	443285	47336	12786	78026	162649	0	744082
	Percentage	60%	6%	2%	10%	22%	0	100%
Arrest	Number	3515	1035	155	215	880	462	6,262
	Percentage	56%	16%	2.5%	3.4%	14%	7.4%	100%
Diversion	Number	1534	481	82	136	816	247	3372
	Percentage	45%	14%	2.4%	7.7%	24%	7.3%	100%
Detention	Number	2495	1194	270	203	1437	218	5817
	Percentage	43%	20%	4.6%	3.5%	25%	3.7%	100%
Secure Confinement	Number	160	63	10	11	70	4	374
	Percentage	43%	17%	2.7%	3%	18.7%	1%	-
Adult Transfer	Number	12	21	3	3	31	2	72
	Percentage	16.7%	29.2%	4.2%	4.2%	43.1%	2.8%	100%

As identified in the above figures, youth of color are systematically overrepresented in both the local and state juvenile justice systems. As youth are moved deeper into the system,

disparities increase, with the most overwhelming disparities for youth charged as adults.

Focusing our efforts on limiting the number of youth overall, and specifically youth of color, that enter the juvenile justice system will provide the best chance of reducing disparities at every decision point. Additionally, we must ensure for those already entrapped in the system, that services are evidence based, culturally responsive, developmentally appropriate and timely.

Figure 3: Long-Term Decline in Juvenile Arrests Accelerated in 2020 and 2021

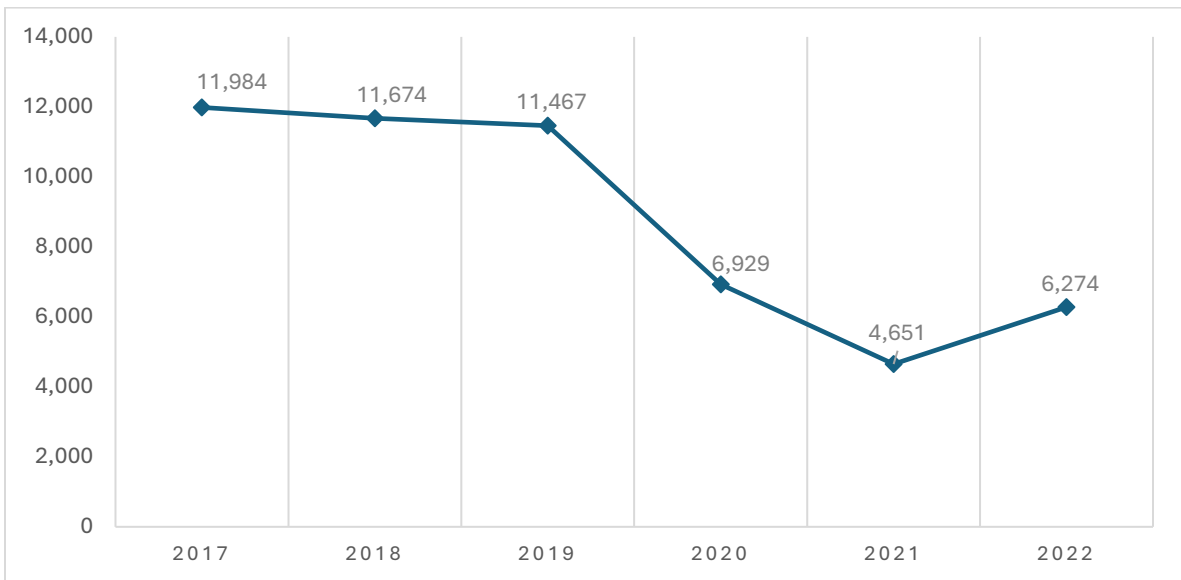
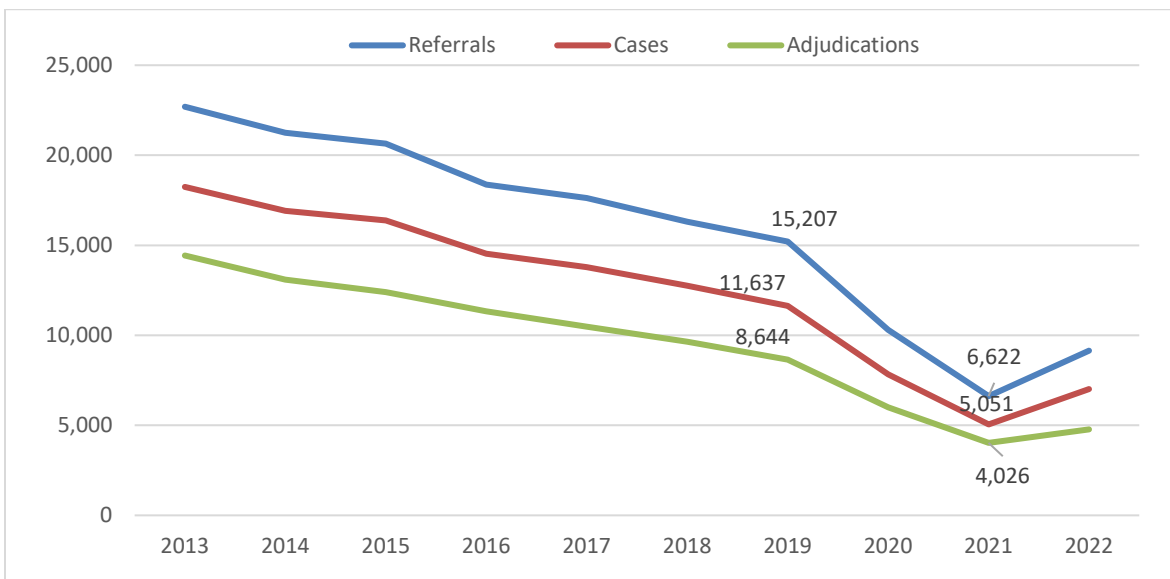
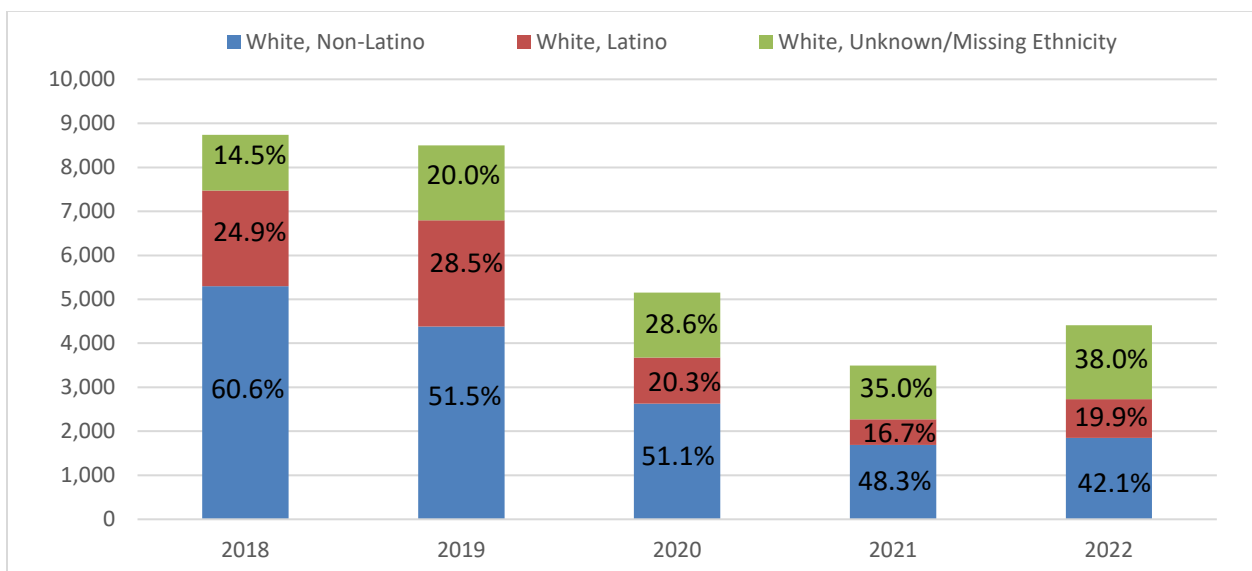


Figure 4: Sharp Drop in Juvenile Court Caseloads, Now Rebounding Post Pandemic



Figures 3 and 4 highlight the impact of the pandemic on arrests and court cases while simultaneously displaying what appears to be a return to the status quo experienced prior to the pandemic. If we are to achieve the goal of limiting the rebounding of arrests and court cases to pre-pandemic levels then we will have to focus significant attention on the front end of the system to maintain the reductions experienced during the pandemic. [The Impact of COVID-19 on Juvenile Detention in Washington State](#) report, completed by Dr. Amanda Gilman and Rachael Sanford of the Washington State Center for Court Research, and funded by the PCJJ with Title II dollars, found that “population-based disproportionality decreased slightly for Black and Latinx youth in the post-pandemic-onset period compared to the pre-pandemic period.” It is important to note that Youth of Color still remained overrepresented; however, these reductions in rates for Black and Latinx youth is the first we have seen since focusing on reducing racial and ethnic disparities. The pandemic forced the system towards equity in a way that had not yet been achieved.

Figure 5: Percentage of White Arrestees with “Unknown” Ethnicity More than Doubled from 2018 to 2022



Data quality remains a challenge as identified in Figure 5, our continued work with the Washington State Center for Court Research and the development of the [Law Enforcement Data Dashboard](#) serves as a platform to engage with law enforcement agencies around the improvement of data collection. Data is available to the OJJ Compliance Manager which will allow for targeted follow up with specific counties who account for a majority of the “Missing” or “Unknown” Ethnicity entries.

Three Year Plan Priorities

Based on the analysis and key findings above, PCJJ’s Three-Year Plan Work Group identified the following priorities focusing on system improvement innovations with the integration of racial and ethnic disparities reduction practices across the juvenile justice system. The PCJJ commits to directing federal Title II funds and PCJJ advocacy and collaboration efforts in the following areas.

Overarching Priority: Reduce the impact of Racial and Ethnic Disparities on Youth of Color involved in or at risk of involvement in the local and/or state juvenile justice systems.

A. Juvenile Justice Data Dashboard (Year 1 – Year 3)

Funding: As we continue to see challenges in data accuracy our focus on the creating of data dashboards continues to be necessary. Continue funding for the annual updating of existing dashboards and the creation of new data dashboards in line with the plan produced during the last 3 Year Plan cycle. Two dashboards have been created to date (Arrests and Juvenile Court Contacts) with plans to add Diversion and Detention dashboards in FFY 2025.

Advocacy & Collaboration: Additionally, we must work closely with law enforcement agencies to ensure their policies and practices account for self-reporting of race and

ethnicity data. The PCJJ will also collaborate with the Washington State Center for Court Research, who have built the dashboard, to educate and support community-based organizations and local systems in using the dashboard to impact policy and practice.

B. Strategies for Youth—Policing the Teen Brain (Year 1 – Year 3)

Funding: As we continue to see disproportionality at the point of arrest, engaging with Law Enforcement is necessary. One way to support agencies wishing to improve their engagement with you is to make technical assistance funding available to law enforcement agencies (LEAs) wishing to engage with Strategies for Youth. This funding will be on an as requested basis as we work on building a more systematic approach through our advocacy and collaboration activities identified below.

Advocacy & Collaboration: Through Compliance Monitoring activities and collaboration with the Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) and the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs, the PCJJ will share the resources of Strategies for Youth with LEAs. We will explore with the CJTC the possibility of the Policing the Teen Brain training being added to their Basic Law Enforcement Academy.

C. Public Defense (Year 1 – Year 3)

Funding in Year 1: As Youth of Color continue to be overrepresented at the point of arrest and then further as they move through the system, it is essential that juvenile defense attorneys are well trained to defend the civil rights of these youth. The PCJJ will provide funding (capped at 2% of total award) to ensure youth have appropriate access to legal counsel through training for juvenile defense attorneys. The PCJJ will direct OJJ to contract with the Office of Public Defense (OPD) to support the training of new juvenile defense attorneys.

Advocacy & Collaboration in Year 2 & 3: The PCJJ will collaborate with Universities and OPD to create a pathway for students coming out of law school to establish practices in rural communities in order to ensure the youth in these communities receive robust defense services.

Priority Area 1: Support upstream systems in responding more effectively and compassionately to the needs of children and young people.

A. After School Programming (Year 1 – Year 3)

Funding: Prevention is the key to reducing disparities. In WA State, Youth of Color are consistently [overrepresented in school disciplinary actions](#) and [misdiagnosed within the behavioral health system](#). If we are to reduce disparities we must move upstream.

Through a competitive RFP process, the PCJJ will provide funding to local, grass-roots community-based organizations who have partnered with schools in underserved communities to provide culturally responsive, trauma-informed and restorative after school programming to students in Elementary and Middle Schools.

Advocacy & Collaboration: Engage with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to identify different curriculums, promising practices, and evidence-based programming that can support schools in serving their students with compassion.

B. Training for Teachers, Administrators, SROs (Year 2 – Year 3)

Advocacy & Collaboration: Work with OSPI to support schools committed to changing culture through training of all staff partnered with intentional and research-based policy and practice change.

Funding: Provide Technical Assistance Funding as requested and as funding is available.

C. Establishing Tribal Partnership (Year 1 – Year 3)

Advocacy & Collaboration:

- As Native Youth are also overrepresented in Washington’s juvenile justice system, we must focus on engaging with the communities that hold the solutions. Tribes hold the solutions. The PCJJ will focus on learning from Tulalip Tribes on their work to establish their own Designated Crisis Responder Program with the goal of identifying the way for the Council to best support their work.
- Together, the PCJJ, Tulalip Tribes, and other experts will identify the correct partners to assess the effectiveness of the DCR program state-wide for youth and young adults and the impact of the definition changes that have caused DCRs to no longer respond to Law Enforcement Referrals.

Funding: Provide funding through the Native American Passthrough dollars to support Tulalip Tribes’ work as identified through the above Advocacy & Collaboration strategy.

D. Coordination of Efforts (Year 2 – Year 3)

Advocacy & Collaboration:

- Continuing to focus upstream requires coordination of efforts as opportunities to respond to the needs of youth prior to juvenile justice system involvement can be found through other service provision systems. The PCJJ will partner with the Department of Commerce for strategic collaboration around Gun Violence Prevention Funding and how the funding connects to violence prevention in schools.
- The PCJJ will create a map compiling all community-based providers receiving funding through state level agencies such as, though not limited to, OSPI, DCYF, Commerce, and HCA as to be intentional in filling geographic and programmatic gaps across the state.

Priority Area 2: Continue to support the reduction of the number of youth who enter the juvenile justice system and who enter detention centers through providing funding and capacity building to community-based organizations serving youth via positive youth development programming in lieu of court involvement and/or detention admission.

A. Community Investment (Year 1 – Year 3)

Funding:

- Even with robust prevention, some youth will still come into contact with the juvenile justice system. For those youth that do, the PCJJ’s vision is for the contact to be fair and beneficial to them. Through a competitive RFP process, the PCJJ will provide funding to community-based programs that focus on positive youth development as a delinquency prevention strategy and who also receive referrals from juvenile courts, law-enforcement agencies, prosecutor’s offices and/or schools in lieu of arrest, detention admissions, case filing, adjudication, exclusionary school discipline, etc.
- The PCJJ will support capacity building and/or replication of effective programs within underserved and/or rural jurisdictions with little resources and many barriers to access of prevention services for youth and families through Technical Assistance dollars as requested and as funding is available.
- Continue to support the TRANSFORM project as outlined in the Racial and Ethnic Disparities Action Plan through Technical Assistance dollars as requested and as funding is available.

Advocacy & Collaboration:

- **Year 1:** Complete a report on the impact of Court-Based (School-Based) Diversion by juvenile court jurisdiction to highlight the work of jurisdictions leading this successful response to low risk, normative adolescent behaviors.

- **Year 2 – Year 3:** Support the incentivization of increased diversion programming using proven practices identified in other successful WA jurisdictions with a focus on the issue of justice by geography.
- **Year 1:** Begin engaging and strategizing with experts across the state on the Community Accountability Board system to fully understand its structure, function, resource capacity and opportunity for prioritizing education and counseling as an intervention over restitution/community service.
- **Year 1 – Year 3:** Continue to partner with and support JDAI jurisdictions through amplifying the stories and voices of youth, families and community-based partners in these jurisdictions. Share the outcomes and successes broadly in an effort to encourage other jurisdictions to consider similar program and process improvements.

Priority Area 3: Collaborate with systems responsible for serving youth in the deep end of the system with a focus on supportive re-entry and Transition Aged Youth (TAY) Programming.

A. Certified Peer Counselors and Credible Messengers (Year 1 – Year 3)

Funding: For those youth already involved in the juvenile justice system, considering the overwhelming overrepresentation of youth of color, the appropriate services must be made readily available. Strong evidence regarding the effectiveness of peer counselors and credible messengers is abundant. Peer Counselors and Credible Messengers are already engaged with young people in the deep end of the system; however, there are not enough for all youth to have their own mentor. Through a competitive RFP process, the PCJJ will provide funding to organizations who provide certified peer counselors and/or

certified/trained credible messengers in the support of youth returning to the community from local juvenile detention or Juvenile Rehabilitation.

B. Educational Advocates (Year 1 – Year 3)

Funding: The provision of Educational Advocates to youth can serve as prevention, intervention, and re-engagement after incarceration. There is strong evidence that the Educational Advocates program in WA State has amazing outcomes for reconnecting youth to their schools and communities. The PCJJ will partner with OSPI to provide funding to add Educational Advocates to local ESDs in order to expand services to juvenile courts/detention centers and ensure each youth exiting JR care has access to an Ed. Advocate if desired.

Advocacy & Collaboration: Partner with OSPI to explore the possibility for all youth to have access to an Educational Advocate as soon as educational engagement challenges are identified.

C. Effective Treatment & Programming (Year 2 & Year 3)

Funding: As we continue to see youth sentenced as adults and for longer periods it is important that the services provided are tailored to the unique needs of emerging adults. The PCJJ will partner with Juvenile Rehabilitation to conduct a landscape analysis on Transition Aged Youth services identified as the most effective and necessary for emerging adults.

Advocacy & Collaboration: The PCJJ will partner with subject matter experts in advocating for the most effective treatment model for marginalized communities with an emphasis on responding to youth with co-occurring diagnoses.

Plan for Collecting the Data Required for Performance Measure Reporting

All programs funded through Title II dollars are required to submit quarterly progress reports as well as data on those served through the program. The PCJJ will continue to direct the Office of Juvenile Justice to collect these reports and to make edits to the required performance measures to ensure alignment with federal reporting requirements.